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ROBERT STEWART
·VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH·

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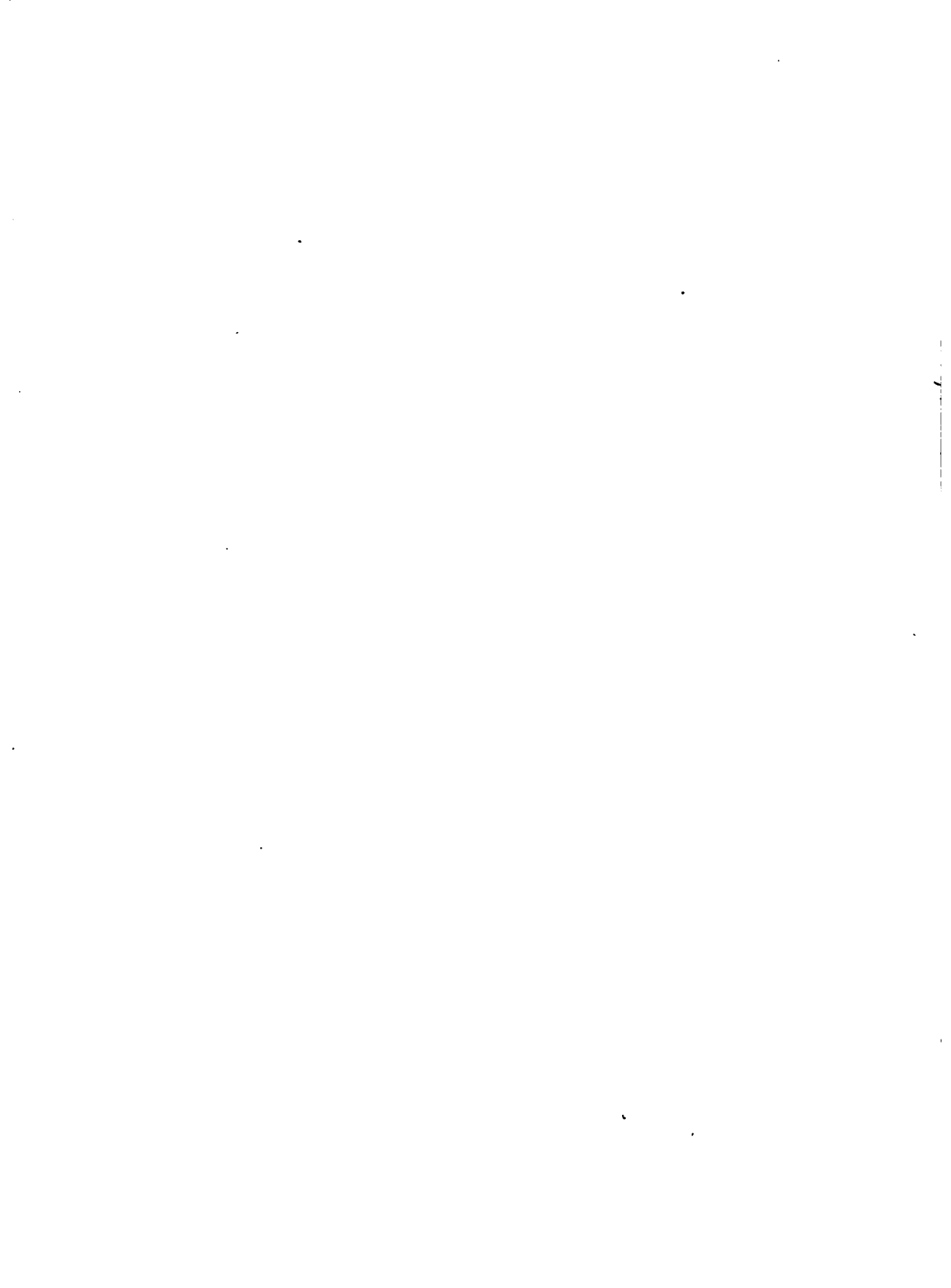
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Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh.

From the portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence in the collection of the

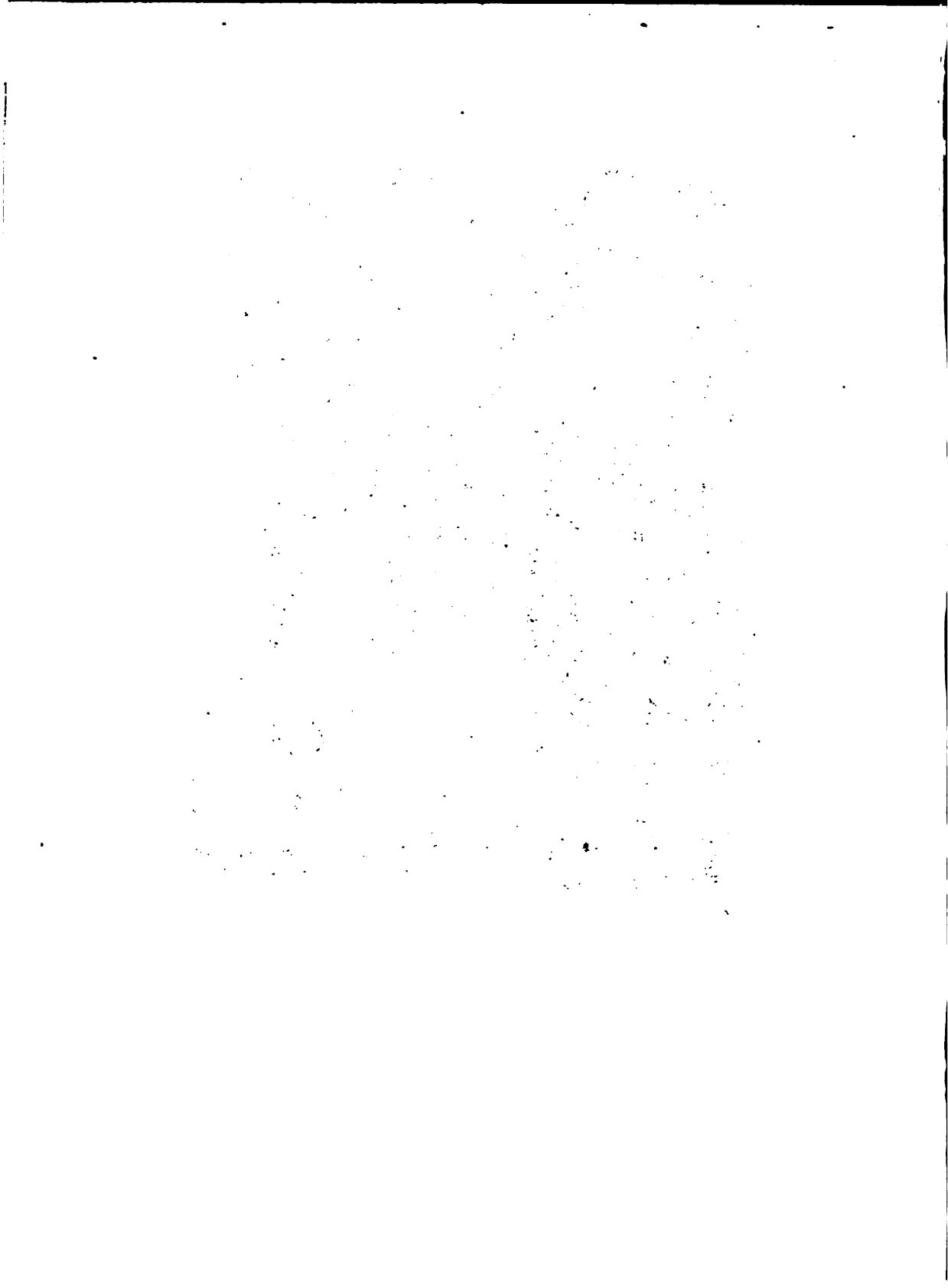
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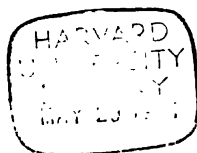
Robert Stewart Viscount Castlereagh

By the
Marchioness of Londonderry

LONDON.
ARTHUR L. HUMPHREYS
1904

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LIST OF PLATES

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH *Frontispiece*

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH *To face p. 48*

PREFACE.

THIS small volume consists of a sketch of one of our most remarkable statesmen, Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh, whose comparatively brief career comprises some of the most stirring events of the 18th and 19th centuries. It was his fate to occupy the position of Chief Secretary for Ireland when the Union between Great Britain and Ireland was carried. He was War Minister during the Campaign in the Peninsula, and Foreign Secretary and Leader in the House of Commons from 1812 to 1822. During that period he went as Minister Plenipotentiary to Châtillon, and represented Great Britain at the negotiations for the Treaties of Vienna and Paris. Those who peruse the following pages, will see that Lord Castlereagh, so far from being the old-fashioned Tory that ignorant opinion supposes, was in advance of his time, particularly in his Imperial policy, which was directed, to use his own phrase, towards securing the 'consolidation of the Empire.' That he was a statesman of far-seeing views is further proved by his action after the Union between Great Britain and Ireland had been carried. Had his policy been then adopted of making provision for the Catholic and Presbyterian clergy, and settling the tithes question, the subsequent history of his native

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country would have been very different. His war administration is regarded by some authorities as less successful, but here too, in my humble opinion, his contemporaries were unjust to him. An eminent writer, himself a leading statesman, has truly said that in England a 'War Minister must find his reward in his conscience or his salary; he must not look for fame.' And, doubtless, if Lord Castlereagh had occupied no other post in the Cabinet, his fame would have been comparatively small, but the reader of the following pages will see that as Minister of War he rendered most valuable services to his country. It was because he and his brother, Charles Stewart, early divined the military genius of the future victor of Waterloo that Wellesley received such rapid promotion in the Peninsula, whilst for the failure of the Walcheren expedition, which is sometimes cited as a proof of his administrative incapacity, he was, as I have shown, really not to blame. At this moment when attention is so much directed to military matters, it is important to note, it was during his tenure of office as War Minister that England unstintedly furnished both men and money as its contribution to the great Napoleonic Wars; and it is interesting also to see that after the manner of other War Ministers he too prepared an Army Scheme which is printed in these pages. During the conduct of the Peninsular War, Lord Castlereagh deprecated unduly dwelling on losses, as being likely to alarm the country

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and unnerve the officers commanding. Finally, it was owing to his courage, resource and tenacity that Napoleon was overthrown.

In so short a review it is impossible to do more than allude to the most interesting correspondence extant between Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington, or, as he then was, Sir Arthur Wellesley : in particular, a private letter advising Sir Arthur as to his conduct after the Convention of Cintra and mentioning his 'dismay' at seeing Wellesley's name appended to it. That Lord Castlereagh paid immense attention to detail can be seen in his despatches to the generals employed in the Peninsular Campaign. Those to Sir John Moore especially will well repay perusal, as showing his confidence in that great soldier and his determination to furnish him with the best possible troops. In one of his last despatches to Sir John Moore he writes : 'In order that your option with respect to availing yourself of the support of the troops proceeding to Coruña may be as unfettered as it is in our power to make it, more particularly that you may be enabled to make use of the Brigade of Guards, whose efficiency for active service you are well acquainted with, it has been decided to send the battalions named in the margin as speedily as possible to the Tagus.'

My excuse for republishing with a few additions so slight a memoir of so great a statesman, is, that the only records published of his life, the three volumes by Sir A. Alison, and twelve volumes of Correspondence

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and Castlereagh Papers, are too voluminous for the ordinary reader. I do not include in this statement a brilliant article published in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1862, by one of our greatest statesmen, which deals particularly with Lord Castlereagh's career as Foreign Secretary.

It is hoped later to publish a complete life of Lord Castlereagh with many extracts from his hitherto unpublished correspondence, now in the possession of Charles Stewart, sixth Marquis of Londonderry. The two portraits given in this volume are taken from pictures now in Londonderry House, painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence in 1798 and in 1814.

ROBERT STEWART, VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH.

‘His life was gentle; and the elements
So mix’d in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, “This was a man!”’

IT is not possible to have one’s home in a man’s house, to sign his name, to live amongst his pictures, to write where his miniature lies before one on the table, without feeling an intense curiosity arise in one’s mind to discover what manner of man he was, who once possessed all these objects, and whose spirit animates them still. And when that man was one of England’s most celebrated statesmen and has left an indelible mark upon her annals, the curiosity takes still greater proportions. In the following pages I plead for a reconsideration of the claims and character of Robert Stewart, who was second Marquis of Londonderry, but who is better known by the title of Viscount Castlereagh, which he bore till within a year of his death. He has suffered from two misfortunes, the detractions of men of genius in his own age and the neglect of posterity. His name was loaded with obloquy by the poets and publicists who opposed him, and the services which he rendered to his country were promptly misunderstood and forgotten by her politicians. I shall endeavour, however, with the aid of documents hitherto unpublished, to prove that the obloquy was in no way deserved, but was the outcome of circumstances and party prejudice, and that the oblivion is an act of deep national injustice.

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I.

To those who are affected by coincidences, it is a curious fact that Castlereagh should have been born on June 18th, the very day on which, forty-six years later, mainly in consequence of his policy, the power of Napoleon was finally crushed. He was the eldest son of Robert Stewart, whose family had been settled in Ireland for over a hundred and fifty years, and his mother was Sarah Frances, daughter of the Marquis of Hertford. Robert Stewart had the reputation of being an extremely able man. He was Member of Parliament for Londonderry in the Irish House of Commons, but he lived nearly all his life at Mount Stewart among his tenants; he is mentioned in Arthur Young's 'Tour,' 1776, as planning and beautifying the place.

The first Lord Londonderry survived till 1821, and had the gratification of witnessing his son's political and administrative successes. In 1814 he wrote as follows to Lady Castlereagh:

'I offer you my most sincere and hearty congratulations, on your early and safe return to London, after the very singular and interesting excursion in which you have been engaged on the Continent, the wonderful change and revolution which you are witness to in France. It must have afforded a scene equally novel and curious, and the volatile deportment, so peculiarly characteristic of the Nation, must have added not a little to the singularity of the awful crisis which had brought such mighty sovereigns, into the same Metropolis, to arrange and settle the peace of Europe. But what above all must have

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been gratifying to you, was to see that your Dr Husband, was lately to succeed in fulfilling the difficult and momentous duties entrusted to him, which have been so unquestionably verified on his return both by the gracious Receptions and Honours conferred upon him, by ye Prince Regent as well as the unbounded National Applause, and general expressions of Gratitude poured out by his countrymen. . . . I can well imagine how much you share and partake in my Paternal Delirium, which sometimes so works on my imagination, I can scarcely refrain from saying, Is all this really true ?'

His picture hangs on the walls of Mount Stewart, and from him Lord Castlereagh evidently inherited the incisive, clearly cut features, firm chin, and 'grand air.' But he also must have inherited that superiority of mind and force of character which commanded success in the career he had chosen. These qualities were also possessed by Robert Stewart's second son, Charles Stewart, who rose to the highest distinction in the profession of arms. From his mother, Lady Sarah Seymour, who is described as a clever and a highly gifted woman, Castlereagh probably inherited his political proclivities, since members of her own family and her mother's, the Graftons, had shown a bent that way. Lord Castlereagh was born and bred an Irishman, and educated in Ireland till his eighteenth year, a fact which once nearly prevented him from receiving office, as the following extract from a letter of Lord Camden will show :

' November 4.

' I understand Lord Cornwallis feels as he ought to do towards you. Mr. Pitt is disposed as much as pos-

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sible to your appointment, though I believe there are others who entertain strong prejudices against the appointment of an Irishman to be Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; yet your merits will, I doubt not, overcome these objections.'

His home was on the shores of Strangford Lough, one of the most beautiful indentations of the Irish coast, bordered on the south-west by the picturesque Mourne Mountains. It is studded with islands, alive with myriads of sea birds and haunted by the liquid whistle of the curlew. Mount Stewart itself is a large demesne consisting of low hills, crowned with woods of beech, Scotch and silver fir. The house lies with

'Only a strip of sea-scented beach'

between it and the water, yet buried in a grove of dark green ilex trees, which show the shining silvery sheen of their under-leaves when ruffled by the slightest breeze. Mount Stewart was never finished in Lord Castlereagh's lifetime, as the money which had been saved by his father and grandfather for that purpose was spent on his election for County Down in 1790. A gallery of family pictures was also sacrificed to the same object. Lord Castlereagh's favourite pastime was sailing on 'blown seas' amidst the 'storming showers' of the lough; in fact, in 1786, he nearly lost his life through the capsizing of his open boat. Possibly the life in cabins* on the seashore, while the house was building, and the dedication of every hour that he could spare to his beloved amusement fostered that calm, cool

* 'My apartment is a snug cabin upon the shore of a vast arm of the sea, and commanding a very fine and extensive prospect.'—*Lord Camden to the Duke of Grafton.*

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contempt of personal danger which characterised him in after-life. The present generation seems unable to realise the great part Castlereagh played on the political stage from 1797 till his death, when he was hardly past the prime of life, in 1822. During these years he was almost continuously in office, and he always held the most onerous and important posts in the Cabinet.

Briefly, to sum up his constitutional achievements: as Chief Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant he carried the Legislative Union between England and Ireland; as President of the Indian Board of Control he increased the Indian Army Establishment and supported Lord Wellesley in the settlement of the Carnatic; he was Minister for War from 1805 to 1809, during the Peninsular War, and, while occupying that position, he appointed Sir Arthur Wellesley Commander in the Peninsula.

His friendship with Lord Wellesley is mentioned by Sir Jonah Barrington:

‘One evening in 1798, the Speaker introduced me to Mr. Wellesley and Mr. Stewart, two young members, who having remained in the House, he had insisted on coming with him to dinner. . . . At the period to which I allude I feel confident nobody could have predicted that one of those young gentlemen would become the most celebrated of his era and the other one of the most mischievous statesmen and unfortunate ministers that has ever appeared in modern Europe. However it is observable that to the personal intimacy and reciprocal friendship of these two individuals they mutually owed the extent of their respective elevation and celebrity; Sir Arthur Wellesley would never have had the chief command in Spain but for the Ministerial

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manœuvring and aid of Lord Castlereagh, and Lord Castlereagh never could have stood his ground as a Minister but for Lord Wellington's successes.'

He advised, and indeed insisted on, the prosecution of the war in Portugal, after Corunna and the failure of the Walcheren Expedition; he was finally Foreign Secretary in 1812; and led the House of Commons continuously for ten years, during which time he took part in the Congresses of Châtillon, Paris, and Vienna.

Lord Castlereagh was returned for Down, his own county, in 1790. This is a distinction which has been enjoyed by members of his family both in the English and Irish House of Commons. When he first entered Parliament he habitually voted with the Opposition, but when he saw the disturbed state of Ireland he left the Opposition and voted for the repression of disorder. During this period he joined and became second in command of the Londonderry Militia, and it was at this time that the first of the portraits which are reproduced to illustrate this memoir was painted. The picture is by the hand of Sir Thomas Lawrence; it renders the eagerness and impetuosity of youth, with a certain haughty carriage of the head. In 1794 Castlereagh married Lady Emily Hobart, daughter of Lord Buckinghamshire. Very little is known of her, except that she was one of the most beautiful women of her day, and that she was keenly interested in Lord Castlereagh's career. She is described in one of the contemporary memoirs 'as palpitating with excitement for her husband's fate' during the Debate on the Union in the Irish Parliament. She accompanied him on his foreign missions to Paris and Vienna. In the former capital the French remarked on the

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'*bourgeois*' habit Lord and Lady Castlereagh had of walking arm-in-arm alone and unattended in the early mornings. There is a family tradition that at Vienna she wore the *honi soit qui mal y pense* of the Garter as a head dress. That she was a dearly-loved wife and Lord Castlereagh's inseparable companion will be seen from the extracts which I am enabled to give from a collection of his unpublished letters. The whole correspondence breathes the passionate affection Lord Castlereagh had for his wife; many of them come under Madame de Coigny's definition of the typical love letter she told the Duc de Lauzun she would like to receive from him every day—*Je vous aime et je me porte bien*. Some even at this distance of time are of too intimate a nature for publication. They show the son's deep admiration for his father, a real affection for his family, and the restless energy of his character. They prove him to have been ceaselessly active, whether at home or abroad. The following letter throws an interesting light on the sensitiveness of his nature and the strength of his feelings. It is undated, but evidently, by the signature, belongs to the early period of their married life:

'MY DEAREST WIFE,—I did not take leave of you because I part with you even for a day with too much regret to exhibit it to others and as I shall arrive too late for the mail at Dundalk, I send you my blessing from Drogheda, our old residence, and entreat you once more to take care of yourself for my sake. The horses are ready and the Lord Lieutenant waits. 'Ever your most faithful husband, R. S.'

Most of these notes are written in a playful tone.

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Lady Emily plainly felt for her husband that jealousy of his affection which comes from fancying that every one else must entertain the same feeling for the beloved object as the enamoured one herself does. The following letter exemplifies this trait :

‘MY DEAREST DR EMILY,—O *you of little faith!* so you suspected me of failing in giving you regular assurances of my affection, and you never recollected that when a traveller is on the road, every day’s journey makes two days difference in the letter which is to return—but I forgive you, since I am not within reach, and almost love you better for being unreasonable enough to expect the natural order of things to be changed for your gratification.’

The following are a few more extracts from a voluminous correspondence with his wife :

‘If I am wrong in wishing it, Dearest Ly. Emily, you will refuse without hesitation, but my happiness so wholly centres in you, that I cannot reconcile myself to a separation of three days, without desiring some memorial that I am not forgot. It would comfort me specially to receive two lines from you at Portsmouth. Tell me that you feel a regard for Ly. Elizth., for Fanny, give me hope that you will derive from my friends the happiness they have confer’d on me, but above all tell me *you love me*, on that my existence depends, and I never can grow tired of hearing it. Your heart is too much alive, not to feel for me at this moment, you have left me, as far as I am myself concern’d nothing to wish for ; you have given repose to all my disquietudes and open’d prospects of happiness, which give me a new interest in life : but in the midst of all the joy I experience,

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you will understand what I feel in taking leave perhaps for the last time of the friend, who has long cherished me as his child ; under whose care I have grown up, and in whose society I have lived. It is indeed a loss which nothing but his release from suffering could reconcile me to : for God sake, Dearest Ly. Emily, continue to love me, and let me some day or other have the gratification to think that since you knew me your happiness has not diminish'd.'

' 1 o'clock, Thursday morning.

' If I may hear from you, direct to me at the Post Office, Portsmouth, but not after to-morrow's post, as I shall return as soon as possible. God for ever bless you. I have sent for the dog, which shall never be forced to emigrate again.'

' NEWTOWN DOUGLASS,

' Sunday night.

' MY DEAREST WIFE,—I promised to write to you every day, and I have even the assurance to think a second letter, at least for the first day of our separation, will not be unacceptable. Since I am to pass the night in solitude, I must indulge in bidding you, *bon soir*. As I advance in my exile, I feel it more severely, and it will be some days before I shall be able to dissipate my regret, by contemplating the Restoration. This banishment was not required to awaken me to a sense of the pleasure of being with you ; it is however a necessary piece of self-denial, and it is in vain to make wry faces, when the dose must be swallow'd.'

' DUMFRIES,

' Monday night.

' I hope, Dearest Wife, you take as good care of

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yourself as I have done, the amount of two days travelling being only ninety miles. To-morrow I propose sleeping at Penrith. Don't you remember the fat hostess where we dined, the stage before Carlisle; from thence I shall reach London with ease in four days, that will be on Saturday. Nothing ever was so *triste* as my journey; I feel our separation every moment more acutely, and shall lose all temper, if the business at Parlt. should be protracted. My occupation on the road is a mixture of Paley-Udolpho-Mornington and State papers. I grow tired of one after the other, and would give the world to be taken prisoner, and carried back even in irons to Mt. Stewart. . . .'

'PENRITH,

' *Tuesday night.*

'DEAREST WIFE,—I have had a miserable, cold, creeping journey to-day—twelve hours in the carriage—and have not gone quite sixty miles. The roads are very bad; however, to-morrow will dispose of the worst part of the journey, and I expect to reach London with ease on Saturday. I cannot tell you how much the turn off at Newbattle recall'd happier moments. You may recollect the road on the other side of Longtown branches off to Langholm, where we slept so comfortably. After this place I leave our track, and shall not recover it till I reach Stilton. What a strange mixture of pain and pleasure there is in passing alone over a route which one has travell'd with a beloved companion. I am sure, if I was lodg'd to-night in the little bed-chamber at Keswick, at the window of which we courted the first breezes of the morning, the recollections would be too strong for sleep. Remember, you are to send me a little journal of all that passes. . . .'

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‘BOROUGHBRIDGE.

‘I cannot retire to rest, Dearest Dr. Wife, tho’ a good deal fatigued, without sending you my blessing. Every stage that removes me further from you adds to my regret, and makes the time which is to elapse before I again cross the Channel seem of intolerable duration. Perhaps the noise and bustle of London may dissipate the anxiety of separation which reflection uninterrupted dwells on with real pain. My day now passes without an event. I roll on from daybreak till long after the light is gone, and, except the relief of reading, I have nothing to divert my thoughts from the loss I have sustained. To-morrow I shall endeavour to sleep at Newark. I shall then be 126 miles from London; the night after, probably at Biggleswade,—the remainder of the journey will be disposed of easily on Saturday. God Almighty protect you, Dearest of friends.—Ever your most devoted

ROBERT.’

‘DUBLIN,

‘August 27th (?), 1796.

‘DEAREST EMILY,—We are setting out for a grand review of the Garrison in the Park; I wish my *favourite Aide-de-camp* was of the party. I feel most sensibly your attention to my Constituents, and consider myself as under the best protection when you are the guardian of my interest in my absence. I know the sacrifice will have its charm when it is made in my service, and I shall esteem the object in proportion as it is obtained thro’ you. So I now leave my fate in your hands, and have no apprehensions that it will suffer from want of zeal in my trustee.

Mr. Pelham has sent a small box from Greg’s, which I ventured to open, knowing its contents. The locket

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is very beautiful, and will not be less acceptable, I trust, from an alteration I propose making in it. I do not think it safe to forward it by the post, so you may expect to receive it either by the Prices or Cleland, whichever goes first to the north.

‘My visit to Castletown was so unlike all former visits that I could not enjoy it. Ly. Louisa was as kind as ever, and in great hopes that your prudence in remaining at Mt. S. had *its motives*.

‘I had only time to enclose a letter and to embrace you. When I reach Limerick I shall be a better correspondent.—Ever your devoted and affectionate

‘CASTLEREAGH.’

‘You will have seen, before you receive this, the detail of poor Charles’s wound. I am in great hope that there is no reason for apprehending any bad consequences. Scars, if not too deep and destructive of shape, are a soldier’s most becoming ornament, and it will animate and attach him more strongly to his profession.

‘I have got your locket done. I had my horses waiting in Merrion Street six hours yesterday, and was detained by business at the Castle. I expect to get away to-day. You are very good to cultivate my friend. I am sure under your care I shall rather gain ground in my absence. . . .

‘Cleland richly deserves to be toss’d in a blanket, and if you will only postpone it till I return, to exculpate the Lex, I will take a corner. I am just going to town in haste.—Dearest Emmy’s devoted friend and husband,

‘C.’

‘DUBLIN,

‘Sept. 28rd, 1796.

‘DEAREST EMILY,—I am so far on my way to

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Limerick ; I shall get there on Saturday to dinner. I hear the pleasantest account of the Regt. Joss has arrived and will carry with him the mare, also two bottles of steel wine.

‘The news is so good, there seems less chance of our *distinguishing ourselves*. This you will not very much regret, nor shall I, notwithstanding the curiosity I have always felt to see a battle. I trust my campaigns will continue as they have begun—perfectly innocent.’

‘NEWTOWNARDS,

‘October 30th, 1796.

‘DEAREST EMILY,—Cleland very incautiously went out last night and was attacked by some villain who bore him ill will. In the dark he snap’d a pistol at Cleland, which miss’d fire, and Cleland fired two shots without effect at him. We are well provided with soldiers, and you may rely upon me telling you everything, and using all the caution you would wish in respect to myself ; so remember, Dearest Emily, that if you love me, you are not to give way to alarms.

‘Your little mare is a great treasure.

‘God ever bless you.’

The next extract is inspired by the unsettled state of the north of Ireland in 1795–6 :

‘DEAREST EMILY,—I hear that there is considerable revolution in Newtown, and most of the principal people are disposed to take the oath of allegiance. My father has put it to them in a way which made the question plain and intelligent and left them no answer but rebellion or cowardice.’

Many of the letters owe their existence to the fact

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that he was quartered at Mallow and Cork with his Militia Regiment.

‘We are ordered to Cork, and shall probably move towards Bandon to make room for other troops. . . . We are all quite well and recruited by a day’s rest. Remember you are a soldier’s wife and must have no care now you are allowed fourpence a day in my absence.’

‘CORK.

‘I am just arrived to find the wind has saved us the trouble of driving the French away. There is not a ship left in Bantry Bay; it is said some have foundered and that others have been taken, but all that I can collect in the confusion of Gen. Stewart’s orderly room—all his aide-de-camps being complete fools—is that they are gone, and that there is a prospect that they may fall into the hands of the English fleet.

‘A letter has brought the intelligence that the enemy’s ships have sailed for the Channel. They seem a crippled fleet and uncertain of their purpose. . . . In the meantime our men have had two days’ rest. They are quartered half in the Church. The scene in the Church the night they came in was truly ludicrous. It had so odd an effect to see all the pews filled with red coats, eating bread and cheese, and a large quantity heaped on the Communion table. When the men first turned in, they had not a dry stitch on, the bread and cheese and straw had not appeared, there was but a single candle in the whole Church. When lodged in the pews your friend the Huntsman suddenly appeared in the pulpit with his bugle horn and made the Church ring with his music.

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The ridicule of it made the soldiers forget their wet clothes and cold Church. . . . We are full 500 strong. If you can send us the flannel waistcoats, it will be of great use.'

In a letter from Châtillon, Lord Castlereagh writes, evidently in answer to some upbraidings :

'It is very dull here, and there is not a single Princess !'

The following letter, though belonging to a later period, I feel must be quoted here, as it evidently shows Lord Castlereagh's character and his always intense affection for his wife :

'I cannot go to bed without telling you, dearest Emily, that I am really emancipated, I do it in the full confidence that you will read it with a sensation not less animated and satisfactory than that with which it is written. I don't know what *you* feel, but I am quite determined, unless you differ, never to pass from one country to another, *even for a day*, without you. You know how little I am given to professions, but I have really of late felt ye deprivation with an acuteness which is only known to those who are separated from what they most love. But I find I am in danger of committing the intolerable barbarism of writing a love letter to my wife. I shall therefore for the sake of my character in the Post Office, trust all experience at this moment in the consideration of my return to that imagination which is best acquainted with me. God bless you.

'DUNSTABLE, 8th October.'

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH

II.

The first speech Lord Castlereagh made in the Irish House of Commons was in defence of Ireland's trade in spite of the East India Company, and in 1797, when Lord Camden was Viceroy, he acted as Chief Secretary during Mr. Pelham's illness. In 1799 his appointment was ratified, Lord Cornwallis being then Lord Lieutenant. During this period he was given the Freedom of the City of Dublin, a fact which must have escaped the memory of a certain late Chief Secretary when he boasted that he himself was the first on whom such an honour had been conferred. The gold box presented with it, which is now in possession of his family, bears the following inscription :

EASTER ASSEMBLY, 20TH APRIL, 1798.

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT

THE LORD MAYOR, ALDERMEN, SHERIFFS, AND COMMONS OF THE
CITY OF DUBLIN

HAVE UNANIMOUSLY VOTED THE FREEDOM OF

THEIR SAID CITY

TO THE RT. HONBLE. LORD VICT. CASTLEREAGH.

IN TESTIMONY OF

THE HIGH ESTEEM WHICH THEY ENTERTAIN FOR THE WISDOM,

THE TALENTS, AND THE PATRIOTISM, WHICH HE HAS

UNIFORMLY DISPLAYED BOTH IN THE

CABINET AND SENATE.

THOMAS FLEMING, *Lord Mayor.*

JONAS PASLEY,

WILLIAM W. ARCHER, } *Esquires, Sheriffs.*

An account of the Rebellion raised by the United

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Irishmen, encouraged by the hope of help from the French, is given in the following extracts. The whole of Ireland was torn and racked with rebellion; even the now loyal north was seething, the principles of the American and French Revolutions having caused great unrest, and the whole question was embittered by the religious difficulty.

‘The rebellion broke out in May, 1798, and the Government then published a proclamation of Martial Law. They proceeded from May, 1798, to May, 1799, exercising Martial Law wherever rebellion existed, without any express enactment for that purpose, on the principle that they were authorised by the King’s prerogative, provided they did not transgress the necessity of the case. Nothing could have induced them to alter the strict constitutional system, but that they felt they must deny to a great part of the country the advantages of the civil law unless it was incorporated with the martial law. The two systems could not co-exist; for how could the martial law be executed if it was liable to be thwarted by the civil law? Though it was put down in the field, the spirit of Jacobinism infused itself into the country, which it afflicted in a manner still more distressing, because not liable to be in the same manner attacked by the King’s forces. Rebellion is not less rebellion because it is less open; because it aims at thwarting the administration of civil justice in the courts of law, not combating the soldiers in open warfare.

‘The whole disturbances of Ireland are directed, first against the persons and property of the well affected, and secondly, against the courts of justice.’

Lord Castlereagh put forth all his energy and the

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firmness of his character to crush the rebellion. Writing to General Lake on June 22nd, 1798, he says:

'I consider the rebels as now in your power, and I feel assured that your treatment of them will be such as shall make them sensitive of their crimes, as well as of the authority of government. It would be unwise and contrary, I know, to your feelings, to drive the wretched people, who are mere instruments in the hands of the more wicked, to despair. The leaders are just objects of punishment.'—*Castlereagh, Corresp. i. 223-4.*

He early saw that nothing less was intended than the dismemberment of the Empire, and he strongly held the view—with which some politicians of our own day affect to be in disagreement—that it is as impossible for an Irish Jacobin to be loyal as it is to expect a cornstalk to grow on a thistle.* He also believed that there was in Ireland an irreconcilable minority disloyal to the core! The pro-Boer resolutions which were passed by the Irish County Councils during the late South African War may lead us to suspect that this contention is still true. Realising the danger to England of a hostile Government in Ireland on her

* Castlereagh had in his possession a memoir signed by the State Prisoners, 1798, A. O'Connor, Thomas Emmet, and W. J. McNain, explaining how the Society of United Irishmen was formed to procure reform in Parliament, and how 'the discussion of political questions, both foreign and domestic, and the enactment of several unpopular laws, advanced them even before they were aware of it, towards Republicanism and Revolution.' In the same memoir they excused themselves for inviting the French invasion in the following sentence: 'The people (under certain conditions) had a right to resist, and were free to seek for allies wherever they were to be found. The English revolutionists of 1688 had called in the assistance of a foreign republic to overthrow their oppressors.'—*Corresp. i. 383.*

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flank, Castlereagh devoted himself to the arduous task of carrying the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland.* His action was amply vindicated when the question was brought before this country in 1795; and, curiously enough, his own constituents in co. Down, who at the time opposed it, ninety-three years afterwards showed their staunch adherence to his policy and their steadfast intention to preserve the Union, when they gave enthusiastic welcome to each of the two Ministers who had but lately occupied the offices of Chief Secretary and Foreign Minister, and who were visiting Ireland on a mission in defence of unionism.

Much of the unpopularity which Castlereagh has incurred on this question is due to the vindictive hostility of Nationalist Irishmen and also to the method which he is supposed to have used to facilitate the carrying out of the Union. It must be remembered that in doing away with the Irish Parliament he was not destroying a popular assembly elected by the people, but merely a small Protestant Parliament consisting of the Protestant nominees of the Protestant landowners in Ireland, whose enmity Castlereagh incurred by depriving them of the patronage belonging to such an assembly. As to the accusations of bribery and corruption which have been made against him, is it not still the habit to give peerages, ribands, and the like as rewards for services to the State? As to the compensation paid to the owners of the

* His views are summed up in a sentence, written on November 28th, 1798; 'On the measure of strengthening our connection with Great Britain by a Legislative Union, which shall pledge the whole force and resources of the Empire to the security of every part, and make that support which we now receive as an act of favour, an act of duty on the part of England.'—T. L.

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boroughs, their right to return Members of Parliament was regarded by both political parties as a vested interest. Even the United Irishmen, in their petition for the reform of Parliament, made no objection to this; in fact, they proposed that, rather than lose the measure of reform, the borough owners should be compensated. Lord Castlereagh never showed acrimony in debate, but was always courteous and considerate to those opposed to him, and he seems to have had the great quality of compelling the respect, when he could not gain the admiration, of his political opponents. Grattan, who was his greatest opponent in the Irish House of Commons on the question of the Union, said to his own son :

‘If you get into the House of Commons, I must beg you not to attack Lord Castlereagh. The Union is past, the business between me and him is over, and it is for the interest of Ireland that Lord Castlereagh should be a Minister. I must beg you again not to attack him, unless he attacks you, and I make it my dying request.’

On another occasion Grattan is reported also to have said, ‘Do not attack Lord Castlereagh, for he too loves Ireland.’

The following letter, written by Lord Castlereagh to Mr. Alex. Knox, shows how important he considered it that a true history of the Union, stripped of all virulence, should be written :

‘LONDON,

‘*30th March, 1811.*

‘MY DEAR KNOX,—I suppose it is because I have no defence to offer that your reproaches will not allow me to defer, even for a day, thanking you for your letter.

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And yet, I do assure you, that although I have no case, externally, to acquit me, I have never ceased, one moment, to feel towards you the warmest and most sincere regard.

‘The description you give of Dr. Miller’s conversion is very gratifying to me. It is, I trust, the harbinger of that light which will yet dispel the unwholesome mists that overhang the Union. I wish it were possible for him to revise, before publication, the introductory chapter. The demons of the present day are at work to make those who carried the Union odious; as, first, having cruelly oppressed, and then, sold their country. The world’s forgetfulness of the events which are a few years gone by, enables them to mislead numbers. I don’t know whether the moment is yet come for giving to the Empire a temperate history of both those great events (I mean the Rebellion and the Union), stripped of the virulence which characterises Musgrave and Duigenan on one side, and Plowden and Barrington on the other. Such a work would accelerate all the good effects of the measure, and would perpetuate the literary fame of the individual who executed it. . . . I wish you would turn this suggestion in your mind. I know no person so equal to it as yourself. You have been not only the eye-witness of both transactions, but have reflected deeply, and written ably on them in their progress. You were, besides, in close habits of confidence with the surviving actors in both these events. The private papers, the official correspondence—in short, all those sources which the future historian will look for in vain—would be opened to you without reserve. My own stock is great. Lord Camden and Lord Cornwallis, Cooke, and other friends, could supply

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ample materials. And the latter would, I have no doubt, both animate and assist you in your labours. Such a work is essential to the public interest—I had almost said, to the public safety. And I really think it would come with great advantage before the world in your name, as you are known to be incapable of stating what you do not believe to be true; whilst the confidential relations in which you stood towards those in government at that period, must have afforded you an opportunity of knowing more than any of those who have professed to inform, but who have, in fact, deceived, the nation, upon the true spirit and character of that interesting epoch in the history of Ireland. The perversion of truth and the party-colouring which so obviously belong to every publication hitherto given to the public, would furnish the intelligible motive for a candid exposition. Your sentiments upon the religious branch of the subject (I mean the sectarian politics of the country) singularly qualify you to write not only impartially, but to speak prospectively the language of peace and conciliation to all. It is a great work: but it is worthy of your exertions. I need not add how truly happy I should be to aid you with any light I possess. And if you will, when engaged in it, pass occasionally, as you used to do, a few weeks in my family (an invitation in which Lady C. most warmly joins), I think we should, by conversing together, be able to recall those impressions which have become indistinct from lapse of time. I feel confident that the intentions of government for the public good, at that time, will bear the strictest scrutiny. There is nothing in the subsequent history of the individual actors that can throw a shade of mercenary motives around them.

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For myself, I can, at least, state, that neither in my own person, nor in that of any of my family, do I, at this moment, enjoy any favours from the crown, conferred subsequent to my being first employed in the public service in 1798: neither honorary, nor pecuniary. I believe their measures, when fairly explained, will stand equally the test of criticism; and that they may be shown to have combined humanity with vigour of administration, when that had to watch over the preservation of the state; whilst, in the conduct of the Union, they pursued honestly the interests of Ireland, yielding not more to private interests than was requisite to disarm so mighty a change of any convulsive character.

‘If Defoe’s *History of the Scottish Union* remains an interesting feature in every library, narrating, as it does calmly transactions comparatively of such small import, how much would a temperate history of Ireland for the last twenty years attract the notice of mankind, both now and hereafter? You have an instance in Hardy’s *Life of Lord Charlemont*. It is read with avidity; defective as it is as a comprehensive work.

‘Ponder over, my dear Knox, what I have said. Don’t take counsel from your nerves, but your principles, in weighing the suggestions, and let me hear the result.

‘Your Irish priest has said, in a few words, everything I have felt upon sectarian regulations. The insensible operation of power is the only resource to manage heterogeneous masses. See what it has done in the Synod of Ulster, and judge what salutary influence it would have on Catholic minds, more prone to bend to authority than the Presbyterians.—Yours, my dear Knox, ever very sincerely,

C.’

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Lord Castlereagh was entirely in favour of Catholic emancipation, and he left office, with Mr. Pitt, on being unable to carry the Bill. After 1800 he laid before the Cabinet a memorandum on this subject, of which the following are the last few sentences. It was not made public till many years after his death :

‘It is obvious that the government of Ireland has difficulties incidental to it, which will require a much greater proportion of Ministerial attention than Scotland did subsequent to the Union. Scotland at that day was thinly inhabited, the people poor and industrious, and of habits so peculiarly regular that, with the exception of the two rebellions which sprang from a feeling of attachment to the exiled family, it may be said to have almost governed itself. Ireland, on the contrary, is highly populous ; acquires wealth more rapidly than civilisation ; it is inhabited by dissenters from the Establishment, split into factions, and those factions committed against each other, with all the rancour of past injuries as well as present distinctions. The law is imperfectly obeyed, and very ill administered by the magistrates, who are too frequently partisans rather than judges. In short, the tranquillity of the country is alone preserved, even in the degree in which it exists, by the perpetual intervention of the hand of government, exercising the most summary powers. Gradually to correct these evils, will require the persevering attention of a firm and impartial government. The Union has removed a great impediment to a better system ; but the Union will do little in itself unless it be followed up. In addition to the steady application of authority in support of the laws, I look to the measure which is the subject of the

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above observations, to an arrangement of tithes, and to a provision for the Catholic and Dissenting clergy, calculated in its regulations to bring them under the influence of the State, as essentially necessary to mitigate, if it cannot extinguish, faction, to place the Established Church on its most secure foundation, and to give the necessary authority as well as stability to the Government itself.'

He also wrote an admirable memorandum on the tithe rent-charge, the collection of which always caused a great deal of friction.

It is sad to reflect how much sorrow and suffering might have been spared to Ireland had these statesmanlike views been adopted a hundred years ago!

Lord Castlereagh's services at this time were so deeply appreciated by his colleagues that, to secure him a permanent position in the English House of Commons, the Government of the day made his father an Irish peer instead of an English one; and it is mentioned in a letter from the Duke of Portland, then Prime Minister, that Lord Castlereagh's successors in the title could claim a British peerage whenever they wanted one. The precedent of making a member of the House of Commons an Irish peer, for a similar reason, has been followed in our day.

Lord Castlereagh was appointed Minister for War in 1805, and resigned on the death of Pitt. The Tory party felt themselves unequal to forming an administration, and a new Government was created, composed entirely of Whigs, under the auspices of Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville. Of course, it immediately changed England's entire policy. Our party

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system, which is excellently suited to home politics, and ensures in some respects a steady rate of progress amidst the fluctuating terms of office of the two political parties, is totally unfitted for anything which requires prolonged continuity of policy, such as foreign and colonial questions, the War Office, and the Admiralty. Few politicians can resist the temptation of snatching at party advantage, even when the interest of the country may suffer. Moreover, this oscillating movement of the State carriage * not only gives us the name of *perfidie Albion* on the Continent, but often causes our own Colonies to upbraid us for not keeping faith with them. The change of policy initiated by the Whigs at this time bore so heavily on the War Office that the Tories, on coming back to office in 1807, when Lord Castlereagh occupied the same post, found, among other items, that the transport arrangements, which cost 4000*l.* a month, had been upset. Owing to this change, the Government was not able to make the necessary arrangements for a promised expedition to be sent from Great Britain in time to assist the allies. It arrived too late to be of any material service, and the Treaty of Tilsit was the result. Alexander I., the Russian Emperor, had been much irritated at the refusal of the British Government to assist him with a loan which he was anxious to negotiate. Being unacquainted with the usages of a constitutional monarchy, he was not aware of the entire change of policy, both foreign and domestic, with which a change of ministry is generally

* In this connection the incident represented by Hogarth in one of his *Election* pictures may possibly occur to my readers. Britannia's coach breaks down, while the coachman and footman are playing cards on the box.—T. L.

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attended, and he could not be induced to put any trust in assurances from this country,

Too much praise cannot be lavished on Lord Castlereagh for insisting that Sir Arthur Wellesley should be appointed to the army in Portugal. He supported him through good and evil report and in the face of great difficulties. It is impossible to overestimate the advantage it must have been to a young commander like Wellington, appointed over the heads of at least four senior officers, to know not only that he had the ear and friendship of the War Minister, but that the latter would give him his unflinching support both in the Cabinet and in Parliament.

Lord Castlereagh has been much blamed for the Walcheren expedition. It must, however, be remembered, in considering the question, that in April, 1808, Lord Castlereagh laid before the Cabinet the plan of that enterprise. From the correspondence it can be seen that he wished it to start as soon as possible, but Cabinets are occasionally difficult to force into rapid action. Time and the psychological moment passed, and the expedition was not sent until the following July. It was not in the nature of things that another commander equal to Lord Wellington could be found, and Lord Chatham was selected,* who, in addition to being thoroughly inefficient, disobeyed Lord Castlereagh's express orders, which were to push forward and seize Antwerp while occupying Flushing. The main object of the enterprise was to cause a diversion of French force from the Peninsula. It may be

* Chiefly owing to Mr. Canning, who intended Chatham to be Prime Minister should anything happen to the Duke of Portland, so that he might pull the strings.—T. L.

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of interest to recall what Napoleon thought about this expedition, which has been universally condemned, as in military affairs success is invariably the badge of merit. Napoleon wrote several letters showing the greatness of the apprehension at the blow which had been struck and the important result he thought would have attended it if it had been executed with the same ability with which it had been conceived. In one letter it is curious to note his distrust of volunteers and half-disciplined troops—a view apparently not held by those in authority in this country at present. He says:

‘Do not attempt to come to blows with the English. A man is not a soldier. Your National Guard, your conscripts organized in provisional demi-brigades, huddled pell-mell into Antwerp, for the most part without officers, with an artillery half formed, opposed to the bands of Moore, who have been engaged with the troops of our old army, will infallibly be beaten. . . . We must oppose to the English nothing but the fever which will soon devour them.’

In 1830 the Duke of Wellington’s opinion was expressed as follows:

‘He [the Duke of Wellington] then talked of the Walcheren expedition and said that though it was wretchedly conducted and altogether mismanaged, it was not ill planned, and that if they had gone straight to Antwerp (as Lord Castlereagh wished) it might have rendered very great service to the general cause and have put Bonaparte in great difficulties.’—*Greville Memoirs*.

As this country is at present considering the reconstruction of the British Army, it may be interesting to

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some readers to study the following scheme, proposed by Lord Castlereagh during the Peninsular War :

‘Nor was the condition of the army at the same period more encouraging, for although there were 208,000 men in the regular force, and nearly 80,000 in the militia, yet of this great force no less than 97,000 were on foreign service or returning from it ; and of the 106,000 at home, at least 25,000 required to be deducted for Ireland and the Channel Islands, leaving about 80,000 in Great Britain, of whom not more than one-half, or 40,000, could be considered as available for active service abroad. To this was added the alarming fact, that the troops of the regular army actually round their colours were nearly 40,000 *less* than had been voted by Parliament. This state of things—the natural result of general prosperity and well-being among the working-classes, which rendered recruiting for the line and militia difficult, with the small pay allowed to the soldiers—attracted the serious attention of Lord Castlereagh, upon whom, as Minister of War, the duty of providing a remedy for the difficulty mainly devolved, and he submitted several memorandums to the Cabinet on the subject, and then laid before the King. Among them are the following. They formed the foundation of the military system of Great Britain during the remainder of the war, which furnished such a powerful body of recruits for the service of the Peninsular campaigns ; and they are of lasting interest and importance to the country whenever exposed to similar dangers.

‘The system of Lord Castlereagh, submitted to and adopted by the Cabinet, consisted of three parts :

1. A sedentary or *local militia* to be raised by ballot,

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consisting of at least 300,000 men, in proportion to the population of the different counties in Great Britain.

2. A regular militia of 80,000 men in Great Britain and 40,000 in Ireland, to be raised in the different counties, in proportion to their numbers; the counties being bound to make up the allotted number by the ballot, or pay a fine for every man deficient; or an equal force consisting of second battalions of troops of the line, officered by the regular officers, but not liable to be called on to serve beyond their own country.

3. A regular army, at least 220,000 strong, liable to be sent anywhere, to be kept up by ordinary recruiting and volunteering from the militia, and by an establishment for the reception of boys, to be educated for two or three years before they were admitted into the ranks.

4. Of volunteers of the best description, furnishing their own clothes, but not their arms, which were to be supplied by Government; of these it was thought 100,000 might be raised.

5. Of trained men, to be taught the use of the firelock and ordinary drill, but not as yet organized in battalions, but intended to fill up vacancies in the local regular militia when they should occur; these might be estimated at 400,000 men. In all, 1,880,000 of land and sea forces for the two islands.

And to provide for the great deficiency of the regular army, he proposed that two-fifths of the regular militia for Great Britain and Ireland should be allowed to volunteer into the line, the deficiency to be supplied by the ballot in the several counties. This measure was calculated at 45,000 men; and having been adopted by the Cabinet, it actually produced 41,786 trained and excellent soldiers for the regular army.'—*Castlereagh Correspondence*, viii. p. 110.

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Extract from *Letters and Despatches of Lord Castlereagh*. Vol. 8, page 198 :

‘LORD CASTLEREAGH TO THE KING.

‘*January* 1809.

‘Under the present circumstances of the war, and the amount of your Majesty’s disposable force employed in operations on the Continent, your Majesty’s confidential servants consider it their indispensable duty humbly to recommend to your Majesty to call the attention of Parliament, immediately on its meeting, to the adoption of such measures for increasing the Regular Army as may enable your Majesty adequately to continue the contest abroad, without thereby unduly exposing the security of your Majesty’s dominions at home.

* * * *

‘The accompanying Instructions are submitted, in execution of this purpose, should the measure itself be honoured with your Majesty’s gracious approbation. Lord Castlereagh also presumes to submit to your Majesty a Memorandum explanatory of the principles upon which it appears that your Majesty’s Regular Army may be most speedily and effectually augmented at the present moment.’

Plan for Improving the Military Force of the Country.

‘HORSE GUARDS,

‘*6th Febr'y.* 1809.

‘I would propose that every Regiment of the Line, with the exception of the 60th, should be composed of two battalions.

‘The first battalion should, according to its effective

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strength, be on the establishment of 800, 1000, or 1200, and should, as at present, be engaged for unlimited service, in regard to time and place. This, if the plan succeeded, as I feel confident it would, gives on an average a disposable force of 100,000 men.

‘The second battalion should be uniformly of the establishment of 1000, composed of men obtained by ballot, as the present Militia, but officered by officers of the Regular Service, forming, in every respect, an integral part of the regiment, passing in their turn, according to rank, into the first battalion.

‘The services of the men of the second battalions, in consideration of their being raised by ballot, must be limited to Great Britain and Ireland, and the Islands in the Channel: this would give us a force for Home Defence of rather more than 100,000 men, a number, it is to be observed, inferior to that which was raised for Militia service during the late war, but possessing this marked superiority over the present Militia, that it would be commanded by officers of the Army, whose habits and feelings would naturally introduce among their men a predilection for the Regular service, and that its services would be equally applicable to Ireland as to Britain.

‘I would recommend that the ten Royal Veteran Battalions should be retained, with the power of placing such of their officers as may from time to time become, through age and infirmities, unfit for duty, on a retired pay becoming their respective ranks, and referring to their best years devoted to their country. Without some such arrangement, it is evident, from the nature of things, these respectable and highly useful corps must become inefficient.

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‘I would place all the rest of the Force of the country in Local Militia, Yeomanry Cavalry, and Volunteer Corps; the latter composed of officers and men who are willing to enrol themselves in corps of not less than 600, under engagements to subject themselves to such drills as may be deemed necessary to fit them to act with Regular troops, to serve in case of emergency in any part of Great Britain, and to support themselves entirely at their own expense, arms excepted, till called out on permanent duty, when they should receive military pay, and be in every respect amenable to *Martial Law*.

‘No officer of the two latter descriptions of Force should receive a higher rank than that of Lt.-Colonel Commandant.

‘The Local Militia to be formed upon the same military principle as the other parts of the Army. The numbers of the battalions must depend on the extent and population of the counties to which they belong; but the strength of the companies and the establishment of the battalions should, as far as circumstances will permit, be equalised.

‘The whole, or any part, should be liable to be called out, according to the exigency of the service; but by this arrangement their duties would become comparatively so little burdensome, that it might be presumed the commissions would be held by gentlemen of the first respectability in their respective counties.

‘The amount of the force produced by this plan is as follows :—

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| ‘ Regular Infantry of the Line for general service, exclusive of Regular Cavalry, Foot Guards, and Veteran Battalions, and the six Battalions of the 60th Regiment* | 100,000 |
| ‘ Second Battalions, Balloted men, with officers of the Line, for service limited to Great Britain and Ireland | 100,000 |
| ‘ Local Militia, at least | 200,000 |
| ‘ Volunteer Cavalry... .. | 82,000 |
| ‘ Volunteer Corps, on a principle calculated to render them very effective for general service; probably not less than | 100,000 |

‘ The result would prove, I conclude, as follow :—

‘ The Militia becomes what it ought constitutionally to be, the basis of our national force. The Local Militia assumes the uniform, colours, and every other article of equipment of the Regiment of the Line belonging to its county. In short, it adopts the County Regiment as part of itself, and gives every encouragement to its men to enlist into this corps. Let the men of the 2nd battalion receive the same encouragement to extend their services into the 1st battalion, and their places be immediately supplied by Volunteers at a low bounty from the Local Militia; I say by Volunteers, because I do not believe there would be found any difficulty in filling up these vacancies; but if, contrary to expectation, there should be any, a ballot must be resorted to, because the very essence of the plan I venture to submit for consideration is the absolute

* This refers only to the numbered Regiments, the West India Regiments, or the Garrison Battalion. The Foreign and Provisional Corps are not included in this computation.—*Original note.*

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certainty of the 2nd battalions being kept complete as long as their services are required; and I humbly conceive that a very little arrangement would be necessary to ensure a large proportion of the men repairing to their colours, in the event of any sudden emergency calling for their services, at times when they might be embodied.

‘If I see the subject right, this would establish what has yet been unsuccessfully attempted, a real and useful connection between the different branches of the Military Force of the country, and by these means actually connect the Regiment of the Line with the county whose name it bears.

‘It would, by these means, present the fairest prospect of placing the recruiting of regiments on the most certain and respectable footing, without at all preventing their employing the means now in practice, if they found it desirable. My opinion of the eligibility of this, or of some plan of the same nature, has been long formed; and the experience of each year more and more convinces me that every measure adopted for the increase of our military force, which does not place it on an *assured* and *permanent* footing, is illusory and inadequate to the object. After the long and repeated warnings we have had, it will be most unpardonable, if we are not prepared to repel the attack of our enemy, by efforts commensurate with the difficulties and dangers with which we are threatened, and the importance of the objects for which we contend.—H. C.’

The signature attached to this paper is that of Lieut.-General Harry Calvert, then Adjutant-General of the Forces.

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At the end of 1809 Lord Camden mentioned to Lord Castlereagh that there was a determination of the Cabinet to call upon him to resign. He did not know that his removal had been resolved on six months previously, but Mr. Perceval showed Lord Castlereagh Lord Camden's private correspondence, and from that he learned that his removal had been consented to by His Majesty and his colleagues. The result was that Lord Castlereagh supposed his intended removal to be an intrigue of Mr. Canning's to facilitate his own advancement, and considered that he had been much ill-used by being allowed to continue in office at so critical a juncture and to have the responsibility of the War Office, when his removal had been not only resolved on by the Cabinet but submitted to His Majesty and approved by him. So, in consequence, he called Canning out. The parties met and exchanged shots. Canning's did not take effect, but Lord Castlereagh inflicted a severe flesh wound on his adversary. The following extract from the *Life of Sir Charles Napier* suggests a possible cause for their hostile meeting:

‘And here, also, in connection with that fatal field, a fact of historical interest shall be related on the direct authority of the late Lady Castlereagh. Lord Castlereagh's duel with Mr. Canning was not, she said, in revenge for the intrigue which ousted the former from office. He was content to leave that for public judgment; but Mr. Canning offered to reinstate him, if he would consent to sacrifice the reputation of Sir John Moore—an insult well answered with a shot.’

Both Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning resigned their seats in the Cabinet. Lord Wellesley suc-

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ceeded Mr. Canning, and Lord Liverpool took office as Minister of War. After the duel and his resignation, Lord Castlereagh explained at length to the King in a private letter his views on the matter, and from the royal answer it will be seen, as has before been affirmed, that Lord Castlereagh was solely responsible for sending Lord Wellington to the Peninsula :

‘ Lord Castlereagh must remember that the King was not disposed to question the correctness of the representations made by the late Sir John Moore, which subsequent experience has so fully confirmed. And, although he was induced to yield to the advice of his confidential servants, he never could look with satisfaction to the prospect of another British army being commuted (?) in Spain, under the possible recurrence of the same difficulties. It was this impression which prompted the King to acquiesce in the appointment of so young a Lieutenant-General as Lord Wellington, to the command of the troops in Portugal ; as he hoped that this consideration would operate with others against any considerable augmentation of that army ; though that augmentation has been gradually produced by events not then foreseen.’

For the better understanding of Lord Castlereagh’s private feelings I introduce at this point two hitherto unpublished letters to his father, and also two to his brother, General Sir Charles Stewart. Lord Castlereagh felt Lord Camden’s behaviour to him the more deeply, as he was a relation or rather connection,* and it was owing to Lord Camden that Lord Castlereagh was made Chief Secretary for Ireland.

* Lord Camden’s sister, Lady Sarah Pratt, was Lord Castlereagh’s stepmother.—T. L.

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'Private and Confidential.

'ST. JAMES'S SQUARE,

'September 21.

'MY DEAREST FATHER,—It has been painful to me to leave you so long in suspense, after the intimation I gave you some days since. The outline of the case, which I then described to you as a most painful one, you will collect from the enclosed correspondence which led to a meeting this morning between Mr. Canning and myself. We each fired two pistols, my second shot took effect, but happily only passed through the fleshy part of his thigh. Mr. Canning's conduct was very proper on the ground.

'You will feel deeply I am sure the cruel situation in which long but unsuspectingly I have been placed, sacrificed to a colleague, as it turns out, without even securing to the King's Government the support from him of which my dismissal from the War Department was intended to be the price, and after thus surrendering me, I was by the infatuation and folly of those who call'd themselves my friends, allow'd to remain in total ignorance of my situation, to plunge into even heavier responsibility after my death warrant was sign'd, and further I was to be kept in profound ignorance of this, until the moment should arrive, namely, the close of the expedition [Walcheren], when I was to be equally dismissed in the event of failure or success, unless Mr. Canning in his mercy should be disposed to spare his victim, being made absolute master of my fate.

'I hope my publick and private character will survive the perils to which it has been exposed, but you may imagine what would have been the impression

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had I submitted to be duped and practised upon, and how small a portion of the world would have believed that I was not *privy to my own disgrace*, it being more generally credible that a publick man should be guilty of a shabby act to keep himself in office than that his colleagues, his friends, his private connection Lord Camden, should presume without any authority from him, *without even his knowledge*, to place him in a situation so full of danger and so full of dishonour. I must give them credit for good intentions, but I can only say in that case, preserve me from my friends, and I shall not fear my enemies.

‘I of course write to you without reserve, but I would not wish the communication to go beyond my mother and Lady Elizth. for the present.

‘I am much hurried; for the present farewell.

‘Ever dearest father your most affecte. son

‘C.

‘The misrepresentations referred to in Canning’s answer, I believe I am fully acquainted with, they are not at all substantial and do not in my judgment alter the main facts of the case.

‘I have not in this hurried note adverted to a notion entertained by my friends in the Cabinet of making an arrangement to cover my fall by giving me another office,* to facilitate which Lord C. [Camden] was willing to resign his. I am sure you will feel that if I could have lent myself to such an idea, I should well have deserved all the mortification that has been prepared for me,

‘STANMORE, *October 3.*

‘MY DEAREST FATHER,—I return Lord Camden’s

* That of President of the Council.—T. L.

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letter, which, like every other part of his conduct in this business, is an attempt by colouring, and inaccurate representation, to extricate himself from the enterprise, in which he has involved himself. After the duel he came to my house in a state of great agitation and broke into my room in tears, condemning himself and stating his wretchedness. Under these circumstances, I gave him my hand and told him I must acquit him of any motives deliberately unkind to me, but that I never could forget the political injury he had exposed me to, and I stated to him in the strongest terms what I felt both of the determination taken to sacrifice me to Canning, and of the danger to which my character and honour had been exposed by the delusions practised upon me. In short, I wished to disclaim personal resentment, and nothing more. He thought unfeelingly after what I had said, which was so undeserved as not to be altogether free from harshness towards a person so distress'd, suddenly turned the conversation and said *Let us only now look forward*, and was proceeding to inform me, of what he and his colleagues had been doing. I stopt him short, and beg'd to decline the confidence. I had a letter from him two days since, proposing to come down here to dinner, I had no doubt with a view of sounding my opinions. I wrote back declining the visit at the present moment, wishing to know nothing, or *to appear to know* nothing of their measures, and hoping that my motives would not be misunderstood. To this I received an answer seeming to acquiesce good humouredly.

‘ You will know by the Papers as much as I do of the Political Changes in progress. The overture made

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to the Opposition has completely fail'd, and Percival has been authorised by the King to make a Govt. at which he is now at work, but apparently without any new material. With respect to myself, I do not consider that I have anything to do with them, nor can I suppose myself to be consider'd *as the supporter* of a Govt. from the individuals of which I have received so recent and so mark'd an injury. What may be *my line* must depend on my own view of publick duty.

'It is a cruel situation to be placed in, that of complete separation from all Parties, but I must endeavour to maintain my own character and conduct and to execute the difficult task which has been assign'd me. I send you rather a detailed sketch of what has pass'd than the hurried letter written to you on the day of the meeting.

'Your ever affecte. son C.'

'STANMORE,

'22nd September.

'DEAREST CHARLES,—I am anxious to give you the earliest information of what has been passing here. To save time I send you my letter to Canning and his answer, which were the only written documents which preceded the meeting. I also add a hasty note to my father, written immediately after. Cooke tells me he means to send you his remarks; some may then be well dispensed with. I expect Lady C. here the day after to-morrow.

'I know nothing of their progress in forming the Administration. I have declined any confidences, having quite enough to do to save my reputation from

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being buried in the ruins of Intrigue, Shabbiness, and Incapacity.

‘God bless you, my dearest Charles,

‘Your most affectionate friend and brother, C.’

‘The misconceptions and misrepresentations referred to in Canning’s answer are in no shape material. They do not touch the main timbers of the case, some of them quite idle.’

‘STANMORE,

‘22nd Sept.

‘DEAREST CHARLES,—Since I wrote I have seen Canning’s letter to the Duke of Portland, dated 24th March last, in which he states his reasons for resigning if some change is not made in the Govt. In a letter of the 18th of this month, to Perceval, he says he never proposed *my removal*, that it was proposed to him, he only desiring to resign. Yet the only object of the reasoning of his letter of the 24th of March, is to bring into view his differences of opinion with the War Department. Neglect, want of exertion and improper choice of officers (for in all, including Dalrymple, he had expressly concurred), is not hinted at; and the whole complaint amounts to this, that there was too much disposition to compromise, and a reluctance to boldly throw over *the officers*, the faults of which the Govt. was innocent, thereby lowering Govt. to save men. The instances are *not sacrificing those*, Lord Wellington included, who were concern’d in the Convention of Cintra, and however Canning may now uphold the Wellesleys for his own purposes there was no opinion entertained in those days of Wellington’s primary responsibility which as you know he did not press, objecting to his being placed on grounds distinct

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from Dalrymple. The second is, that *Moore* was not *given up*. The third and only remaining one, delay in strengthening Portugal. You know that there never was an hour's delay in sending the troops, and that the only hesitation on my part in sending Arthur Wellesley depended on the question whether there was a reasonable prospect of his finding the British Army in possession of Portugal. I certainly did not wish to incur all the pain of superseding Cradock and all the ridicule of a change of command under such circumstances, till I knew positively that Soult had not found himself enabled to prosecute operations against Lisbon. So soon as that point was clear'd up, you can well recollect the order with which (under all the awkwardness of Cradock's supersession) I engaged in that measure. As the whole of this case of Canning's against me is comprised within the period when you were in the Department, and consequently informed of everything that was going on, although absent for a considerable part of the time on service, I have been anxious to acquaint you of ye whole that appears in this formal remonstrance of the Duke of Portland, and upon which alone, even on Canning's part my dismissal was argumentatively claimed. The difference between the calling for the removal of a colleague *by name* or by a statement, I own would never have occur'd to me as matter for distinction, if I had not found it gravely stated by Canning in his letter of 18th inst. It may have been intended to convey the idea, that the person who supplied the name concurred in the measure, but I have not the smallest reason to believe that the idea of removing me ever occur'd to or was wish'd by any other member of the Govt., and that it was only reluctantly

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conceded in the shabby hope of retaining Canning, which hope has been disappointed, as it deserved, by this demand on his part being only a step to other and larger objects. C.'

In after years Lord Castlereagh offered the Embassy at Lisbon to Mr. Canning, and he accepted it; and in the Castlereagh correspondence there is a charming letter from Castlereagh after the Battle of Waterloo regretting that Mr. Canning's joy at the great victory should be saddened by a personal loss :

‘FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 22, 1815.*

‘MY DEAR SIR,—I regret that you should personally have any drawback to the triumphant news the packet will convey to you. The astonishing, even by himself the unexampled, exertions made by the Duke in this greatest of all his battles, necessarily led to an extraordinary exposure of his own person and consequently of his staff; to this is to be attributed the fall both of Lt.-Col. Canning and Sir G. Gordon.’

III.

When Lord Castlereagh resigned office in 1809 he had secured the independence of his country, had arrested the French victories and had set in motion a train of events which finally produced the decline and fall of Napoleon. He had appointed a commander—the greatest we have had for many generations—and had established an army scheme. Lord Castlereagh's removal was generally approved by a large portion of people, who judged his administration of the War Office by the failure of the Walcheren Expedition and

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the retreat of Wellington after Talavera. It was not until years after his death that the vindication of Lord Castlereagh's memory was furnished by the correspondence and documents of which he left so large a number.

But these documents have never exercised their full force, and the hostile legend of his incapacity as a Minister still gains credence with the ordinary public. It is time to emphasise the fact that it was Lord Castlereagh who originated the system of 'La Grande Guerre' against France, striking out from the policy of small isolated expeditions pursued by Mr. Pitt, and condemning the entire abandonment of continental alliance recommended by Mr. Fox and practised by Lord Grey. He also kept together the Great Coalition. There is a most interesting Memorandum suggested by Lord Castlereagh in the papers of the Prime Minister, the Duke of Portland, describing a plan to attack Spain (which the English Government then thought was too friendly to France) by sending an expedition to conquer her South American Colonies. This policy, years afterwards, was followed by Canning, who thus carried out the views of his predecessor in Office, though the conditions were then different.

In the year 1807 a correspondence took place between the Honourable Robert Dundas and Lord Castlereagh as to whether the East India Company or the King's troops from the Cape should take possession of the two Portuguese settlements, Mozambique and Delagoa Bay, Castlereagh inclining to the view that the Company should undertake it and garrison both with Hindoo troops, but that the places should be protected from the sea by English cruisers. What an amount of trouble would have been saved had these excellent

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intentions been carried out! In fact, he was in advance of his age, and undoubtedly there is nothing that excites such animosity as disturbing settled ideas.

Before I close the account of his War Office Administration, as this country has been lately at war, it may be of interest to give a few sentences from a speech in the House of Commons commenting on the losses at Talavera:—

‘The loss on that day has been much dwelt upon and none can lament the brave men who perished on that occasion more sincerely than I do. Sharing as I do to the very utmost that feeling, I must at the same time deprecate that careful searching into the details of loss which is calculated to unnerve the military energy of the country.’ He might have added that it paralyses the General’s action in the field. One cannot help wondering what would have been the fate of Lord Wellington and the final issue of the campaign against Napoleon if the war had been conducted under the microscopic conditions of the present day.

When Lord Castlereagh had resigned office, he still most loyally supported the Government, and implored the country not to be shaken by reverses, but to continue the Peninsular Campaign. During the debate on this question Mr. Whitbread congratulated Lord Wellington on being supported by such an able panegyrist. Castlereagh also took part in the Regency Debate and the Bullion Question, on which turned the abandonment or the prosecution of the Peninsular War, and whether the country should revert to cash payments or not. The last few words of his speech display the peculiar style of his oratory:

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‘. . . Let it be recollected that I thoroughly admit a recurrence to cash payments, when circumstances will permit, to be essential to public credit. I rest my justification of the existing system upon the plea alone of an over-ruling necessity—a necessity not arising from an ordinary state of war, but arising out of the extraordinary and new principles on which the present contest has been conducted by the enemy. When the necessity ceases, I trust the system now in operation will cease with it; and I am sanguine in my belief that, with industry and commerce so flourishing, the return to our former habits, the drain of war being at an end, will not be a work of difficulty, and need not be a work of time. But, in the meantime, as it has been our policy in conducting the war to annoy the enemy abroad rather than await his attack on our own shores, so let us preserve that system of currency which enables us to confine his violence to the Continent, and to deny to him the power of interfering with, or shaping the most vital branch of a system under which we flourish as a nation, and through the fruits of which we are enabled to maintain the contest on behalf of the world as well as of ourselves.’

It is remarkable that this view was opposed by the leading economists of the day, who were on the Bullion Committee, and by the whole of the Whig party. But the recommendation of the Bullion Committee was not carried into effect, and if ever a country was saved from bankruptcy by the efforts of individual men it was saved on this occasion by Mr. Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by Lord Castlereagh.

On Lord Wellesley's resignation of the Foreign

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Office, in the spring of 1812, Lord Castlereagh succeeded him; and after the murder of Mr. Perceval, on May 11th of the same year, Lord Liverpool being instructed to form a new Administration, Lord Castlereagh retained his place and at the same time assumed the arduous post of Leader of the House of Commons. The Orders in Council with regard to neutrals were repealed at Mr. Brougham's instance, but before the news had crossed the Atlantic, war was already declared by the Americans against Great Britain.

In watching Castlereagh's career at the Foreign Office it will be observed that he soon obtained that ascendancy over his colleagues which a dominant and courageous spirit in a Cabinet never fails to acquire; and being determined that the war in the Peninsula should be prosecuted in the most vigorous manner, he poured reinforcements into the Peninsula and succeeded in furnishing Lord Wellington with 51,000 English troops in June, 1812, of which 6546 were cavalry. This force was further strengthened by 20,000 troops sent out in the autumn.

It is not often given to a Minister in one department, as it was to Lord Castlereagh, to prepare the military force as Minister of War and then to be enabled to use it as Foreign Minister under the command of such a leader as Lord Wellington.

When he was in Opposition, Lord Castlereagh, on March 4th, 1811, gave the following details of the measures he had adopted for the increase of the army during the time that he held the seals of the War Office:

‘It having fallen to my lot officially to propose all the onerous measures which have been adopted since





James O'Neill Engraving 1797

Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh.

*From the portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence in the collection of the
Right Hon. the Marquess of Londonderry, K. G.*

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the year 1805 for levying men, it is gratifying to find that these efforts have achieved the great object to which they were progressively directed; that the zeal and perseverance of the nation, in cheerfully submitting to these burdens, has been rewarded by the powerful army which it now possesses, unexampled in any former period of our history, and which has now left to Parliament only the easier task of upholding what by past labours had been created. What has been stated as the present state of the army by the noble Lord is the best proof of this. It consists of 211,000 regulars, 24,000 artillery, and 80,000 militia, in all respects in as efficient a state as the line. Compare this with its state in 1805—viz., regulars, 150,000; militia, 90,000; artillery, 14,000—thus showing an increase, after supplying all the waste of war of 56,000 regulars, and a decrease of 10,000 militia.'

It is commonly believed that the liberation of Europe from the yoke of Napoleon was due to a great spontaneous rising of the subject populations. As a matter of fact, this general rising would have proved nugatory had it not been for the strenuous efforts of a very few men. If Lord Castlereagh had not disregarded military promotion by seniority, and, appointing Lord Wellington to Portugal, had not supported him and urged the continuance of the Peninsular War when both schemes were met by a powerful opposition, the Russians could never have resisted the French invasion; and but for enormous subsidies paid by the British Government to Prussia, Austria, and Russia, these countries could never have stood against the large forces commanded by Napoleon. Another factor at this juncture was Sir Charles Stewart. He

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was Lord Castlereagh's half-brother, and was absolutely in his confidence. Unluckily the bulk of the correspondence between the brothers, lasting over twenty-five years, has been lost, but two extracts from the following letters show the interest the statesman always took in his brother's career. Sir Charles Stewart had been offered the post of Adjutant-General to the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula, and it was in discussing with Lord Castlereagh whether he should accept that position that these letters were written :

'I certainly think that the course of your future military life must materially hinge on your present decision ; thinking so, I am bound to say so, but still the alternative is a question more or less of ambition. Honourable your station must be in any event, but if it is to be great, or as full of distinction as your own talents and the advantages of your station in life are calculated to make it, you must mark to all the world that your profession has no competitor in your eyes—*not even your wife.*'

In another letter :

'I have encountered the responsibility of encouraging you to make every other consideration subordinate to your fame as a soldier. Modesty is no proof of want of resource. Do not, however, detract from your own powers. I am confident of your energy and capacity. Resolve to rise, and you will succeed.'

In 1814 Sir Charles was sent as special envoy to the headquarters of Bernadotte, who was in command of the Northern Army. He discovered his lukewarmness to the cause of the Allies, and he compelled the advance of the Northern Army so that it was brought into action at Leipsic—the decisive action

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that had caused the retreat of the French army. The Allies, however, did not press their advantage, though Lord Castlereagh urged them most strongly to do so; they were inclined to treat with France. Napoleon wished to continue the war.

‘In this year,’ as Lord Castlereagh observed, ‘it is an astonishing effort for a nation to have 158,000 men under arms in your own dominions, sustaining an expenditure which this year reached 117,000,000*l*.’ Early in 1815 it was thought as well that a plenipotentiary should be sent to the headquarters of the Allies. Lord Harrowby was chosen, but from a private letter in the Castlereagh Correspondence it is shown that he himself suggested that Lord Castlereagh should go if he could be spared from leading the House of Commons. Lord Bolingbroke’s mission to Paris was quoted as a precedent, though Great Britain was actually represented by Lord Cathcart, Sir Charles Stewart, and another. Lord Castlereagh’s instructions from the Cabinet left him full powers, and enabled him to conclude treaties either for peace or war without consulting his Government, and being

‘Exceeding wise, fair-spoken and persuading,’

it proved a most fortunate appointment for England. Castlereagh arrived at the allied headquarters in January 1814, and the following account is taken from Thiers:

‘The British Cabinet determined upon sending the most eminent of its members, Lord Castlereagh, to attend the Ambulatory Congress of the Coalition, to moderate the passions, preserve unanimity, and carry out the views of England, and when they were secured,

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to vote in every other respect for reasonable measures, in opposition to extreme resolutions. To be wise for all the world except his own country was therefore his mission, and a very natural one. He was to explain the War Budget introduced by Count Pozzo di Borgo, and make use of the riches of England to make his views triumph, by throwing into the opposite balance not his sword but his gold. No man was better qualified to discharge such a mission than Lord Castlereagh. He was the elder brother of Sir Charles Stewart, accredited with Bernadotte, and one of the most active and energetic servants of England. Lord Castlereagh, descended from an ardent and impetuous Irish family, bore in his bosom that disposition, but tempered by superior reason. In mind honest and penetrating, in character prudent and firm, capable at once of vigour and address, having in his manner the proud simplicity of the English, he was called to exercise, and did exercise, the greatest influence. He was in every particular furnished with unlimited powers. With his character and his instructions you might almost say that England itself had risen up and formed the camp of the Coalesced Sovereigns. Having set out from London in the end of December, he made a brief stay in Holland to give his counsels to the Prince of Orange and was not expected at Fribourg, the Allied Head Quarters, before the second half of January. No one before his arrival would take a line or give an answer. Every one was waiting to see him to endeavour to win him over to his side. Alexander sent him a message through Lord Cathcart that he wished to be the first to converse with him.'

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It would be impossible to follow in this brief essay the negotiations of the Council. From all accounts, Lord Castlereagh's calmness, decision and charm of manner won the confidence of all the negotiators. Thiers again gives a graphic picture of the part he played at Châtillon:

'The bad humour of the new Swede [Bernadotte] who would willingly have become again a Frenchman to reign over France, had lately become visible on every occasion when he met with the least contradiction. He was not an object, indeed, of fear, but nevertheless any disturbance in the Coalition, when its forces were entirely occupied with Napoleon in front, might draw after it grave consequences, and they were seriously apprehended if Bernadotte were deprived of the most considerable part of his army. Alexander, like the rest, was restrained by this apprehension, and declared the thing impossible. Then Lord Castlereagh suddenly rose, *and, acting as a sort of Providence which disposed of all*, asked the Military Officers present if they really regarded the junction of the Corps of Winzingerode and Bulow as necessary. They having answered in the affirmative, he at once declared that *he took upon himself the whole responsibility of the proceeding*, and that he would remove all difficulties with the Prince Royal of Sweden. Upon this, all objections were hushed, and it was decided that Blucher should be reinforced by the entire Corps of Winzingerode and Bulow and then moved forward between the Seine and the Marne in the way which he might deem most conformable to the general interests.'

According to Lord Ripon, Lord Castlereagh's own words were, 'The plan must be adopted and orders

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immediately given.' He never had any fear of taking responsibility. His great object was to push the war, should it be necessary, and to keep the coalition together. This he succeeded in doing, though each country had its own axe to grind; and it was only through Lord Castlereagh's firmness and diplomacy, both here and in Paris and Vienna, that the coalition lasted long enough to complete Napoleon's overthrow. His great idea for France was 'the ancient race and the ancient territory,' though at Châtillon he was willing to treat with Napoleon and leave him in possession if he would give up Antwerp and let France subside between the boundaries she had occupied in 1790.

The Treaty of Châtillon was signed between Prussia, Austria, and Russia, and Lord Castlereagh gave this account of it to his Government:

'I send you my Treaty, which I hope you will approve. We four Ministers, when signing, *happened to be sitting at a whist table*. It was agreed *that never were the stakes so high at any former party*. My modesty would have prevented me from offering it; but as they chose to make us a military power, I was determined not to play a second fiddle. The fact is, that upon the face of the Treaty this year, *our engagement is equivalent to theirs united*. We give 150,000 men, and 5,000,000*l.* equal to as many more; total 800,000. They give 450,000, of which we, however, supply 150,000, leaving their own number 300,000. The fact, however, is that, sick, lame, and lazy, they pay a great number more. On the other hand, *we give to the value of 125,000 men beyond the 300,000*. What an extraordinary display of power! This, I

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trust, will put an end to any doubts as to the claim we have to an opinion on Continental matters.'

Castlereagh arrived in Paris in April, and the preliminaries of peace were signed the next day. The Isle of Elba was assigned to Napoleon. The questions of the fate of Poland and Saxony were adjourned to the Congress to be held at Vienna. The allied sovereigns came to London, with one exception—that of the Emperor of Austria. In defending the Treaty of Paris, Lord Castlereagh said in the House of Commons :

'All the imputations that we had engaged in the war or continued it for purposes of selfish ambition have been removed. The conduct of Great Britain has been vindicated: it has been proved that she entered into the war from nothing short of an overruling necessity; and that she was ready to relinquish everything of which for her own security she had been obliged to take possession, as soon as it had become manifest she could make that sacrifice without danger. If the country has for twenty years sustained the most severe burdens, and done so with a noble fortitude, it is at least gratifying for her to find that she has come out of the tremendous conflict in which she has been engaged with the acquisition of that security for which she contended, and with a reputation unstained by reproof. She bravely stood by the Powers of Europe in circumstances of unprecedented peril; feeling that it was her duty to enter the lists in defence of all those moral and political principles which were endangered, abstaining from too cautious and minute calculations of the chances of the conflicts, and leaving the result to Providence.'

At Vienna Lord Castlereagh again represented

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England. He had received the Garter a year before, and it is here that Talleyrand is said to have exclaimed, '*Ma foi ! c'est distingué !*' on seeing him in his ordinary dress-coat with only the Riband of the Garter, a contrast to the foreign envoys in full uniform and covered with orders and medals.

IV.

During the Congress of Vienna one of those ebullitions of feeling which periodically convulse this country when questions of religion or humanity are concerned, suddenly arose. These paroxysms, though creditable to the warmth of our hearts, are hardly so to the coolness of our heads, and, in Lord Castlereagh's own words, 'in every small town and village, a meeting was held to advance the cause of the abolition of the slave trade, which, compared to the settlement of and adjustment of the equilibrium of Europe was at that moment a somewhat minor detail,' though Lord Castlereagh obtained important concessions from the Allies.

The discussions on the partition of Poland were continued, Lord Castlereagh declaring that it was a crime. He has been much blamed amid all these difficulties, for not standing out more persistently for the autonomy of Poland. These are Lord Castlereagh's views to Mr. Vansittart, Chancellor of the Exchequer :

'The progress of our Revenue as contained in your interesting statement is highly satisfactory ; but we shall have occasion for all our resources and you may rely on my desire to economise them as much as pos-

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sible. The great question in my hands is the Dutch Loan, which connects itself, however, with our claim to retain Demarara, Berbice, and Essequibo.

‘If the Emperor of Russia shall persist in refusing to acknowledge his Treaties, or to treat in pursuance of them *à l’aimable*, I shall have no difficulty in stopping that demand, provided that I can secure the Low Countries against his arms and his intrigues. But if His Imperial Majesty shall change his tone and make a reasonable arrangement of frontier on the side of Poland, if he shall allow the other European arrangements to be equitably settled, including those of Holland, and alter his tariff besides, then, my dear Vansittart, I must come upon you for my pound of flesh—or, if I cannot stop his power upon the Vistula, and it breaks loose, and shall carry everything before it to the Meuse, I cannot answer for the consequences: I only beg you will believe I shall do my best to save your purse. The engagements with Holland shall be no obstacle to this, as I had rather give the Prince of Orange something more to defend and fortify the Low Countries than *assist the credit* of a Calmuck Prince to overturn Europe.’

Lord Castlereagh was still indefatigable in keeping the Grand Alliance together, and in making preparations to fight the formidable enemy who had escaped from Elba. Happily, Napoleon was finally crushed at Waterloo, June 18th, 1815.

After Vienna, Castlereagh, on April 15th, had been recalled to take his place in the House of Commons, where the Government had fared badly without him; and, on his return the whole House rose and cheered him to the echo. Talleyrand wrote to congratulate

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him on the speech he made in the House relating to the Congress :

‘J’ai lu avec un extrême plaisir vos belles discussions parlementaires : elles ont eu ici un grand succès. Vous nous avez rapppris nos affaires ; je sais à present, et par vous, ce qu’il faut dire du congrès.’

In 1816 he made a great effort to maintain the Income Tax. In the same year he defended the Army Estimates, imploring the country not to disband the Army, but keep up the Establishment.

Thus rapidly, and disconnectedly, I indicate a variety of actions, each of which deserves fuller consideration, and each of which is sufficient to prove that Castlereagh deserved well of England and of Europe.

We come, however, to 1816, and to the great reaction—the reaction which cost Lord Castlereagh his popularity. The war had continued for over twenty years, and a war must be paid for. While the struggle lasts everybody is willing to give, pay, and do, anything ; but after it is all over, to sit down in cold blood, while we calculate the cost and meet the bill, is a very different thing. In 1816 the harvests were bad, prices went down, and enormous reduction in the Government expenditure and very heavy taxation strained the resources of the country. Castlereagh was very anxious that the Sinking Fund should be continued. He says :

‘The charges for the present year are calculated at about thirty millions sterling. The country, however, has good reason to hope that next year the expenditure will be diminished a third, reducing it, exclusive of the charges of the debt, to twenty millions. It is scarcely possible to effect any further reduction con-

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sistently with the national faith and security.
Our debt will remain and increase, even during peace ;
and we shall inevitably be precipitated into all the dangers consequent on a short-sighted and illusionary system of finance.'

In all great crises the country invariably looks for a scapegoat, and who so easy to attack as the most powerful Minister? In this case he was one who never courted the popularity or the approval of the many, but was content with the approbation of the few, and invariably carried out unflinchingly that which he had undertaken.

England having gathered herself together and made a stupendous effort to crush Napoleon's rule in Europe, a reaction set in, and whole armies, as Lord Castlereagh said, were sent out to assist the rebellion in the South American Republics against the power of Spain. In fact, we were giving way to that little habit we have of encouraging nations who are 'rightly struggling to be free,' though we sternly repress any such aspiration on the part of nations connected with ourselves.

Lord Castlereagh brought in the Foreign Enlistment Act, which was to prevent help being given legally against Powers with which we were friends.

In 1817 England was in a state of veiled rebellion, and the Government thought it necessary to move the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. The Bill was fiercely assailed in both Houses of Parliament, and the following are the first few words of Lord Castlereagh's speech :

'In the whole course of my life I have never had to perform a more painful duty than I am now called

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upon to discharge. It is peculiarly painful to find that after having passed through all the dangers and pressure of war, it has become necessary, notwithstanding the return of peace abroad, to require the adoption of proceedings that might insure the continuance of tranquillity at home. I had fondly hoped that after the dreadful record of the sufferings of mankind which the French Revolution had afforded—after the proofs which the annals of the last twenty-five years had presented, that those who engaged in such hazardous enterprises brought not only destruction on their own heads but ruin on their country—it would be impossible to find any individual so dead to all feeling of private and public duty as to attempt to lead others on to similar undertakings.'

For bringing in the Six Acts, in 1819, a storm of obloquy fell on the Government, and particularly on Lord Castlereagh. He was attacked with all the rancour possible by Moore, Byron, and Shelley, but, as a French writer most pertinently asks :

' Fallait il laisser périr l'Angleterre pour plaire aux poètes ? Fallait il seconder les desseins des bruleurs de métiers et des voleurs de maisons ? Lord Castlereagh ne fit que son devoir d'homme d'état ; il sauva la société, et que veut on de plus ? au péril même de sa renommée ; immense sacrifice de ceux qui se vouent aux idées d'ordre au milieu du désordre.'

No one can question that Lord Castlereagh did his duty as a true patriot when he brought in the Six Acts. For him, as for the Duke of Wellington, reform at that time spelt revolution. He had seen what Liberal ideas had led to : to revolution in his beloved Ireland, to revolution and even to the upheaval of the founda-

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tions of society in France ; and when he saw England threatened by a like misfortune, culminating in Thistlewood's plot to murder the whole Cabinet at Lord Harrowby's at dinner, it was not wonderful that he should endeavour to crush the first signs of such incipient rebellion.

King George III. died in 1820, and was succeeded by the Prince Regent. The history of George IV.'s coronation and the troubles arising from his refusal to allow the Queen to participate in it are well known. Lord Castlereagh attended the ceremony, and a contemporary writer mentions that on entering the Abbey his great good looks and magnificent dress elicited an involuntary cheer from the crowd.

In 1821 Lord Castlereagh accompanied the King to Ireland on one of those visits of the Sovereign so passionately longed for and deeply appreciated by the loyal people in Ireland.* He received an enthusiastic welcome, such as has rarely been equalled on the other side of the Channel. Lord Talbot was then Lord Lieutenant. The following letter from Lord Castlereagh to his wife will show how he appreciated the behaviour of his country :

‘DUBLIN, *August*, 1821.

‘MY DEAREST EM,—A thousand thanks for your letter ; the lines were most beautiful and I have read them often over ; where did you find them or were they your own ?

* This was written before the recent visits of the Sovereign to Ireland, and those who, like the writer, were fortunate enough to witness the display of enthusiasm and loyalty in that country can with absolute sincerity repeat Lord Castlereagh's words : ‘They have been without alloy—everything perfect.’—T. L.

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‘Never did Providence preside over any barren transaction more auspiciously than over this visit to Ireland. It has been without alloy—everything perfect. I have not seen a drunken man in the streets—I have not heard an unkind word drop from a single individual, and yet I have mixed unsparingly with the people; and the effect is not less strong in the remote parts of Ireland where every village has been illuminated for the King’s arrival. A gentleman met a poor Paddy from his part of Ireland in the streets of Dublin and asked him what had brought him to Town? “Sure, your Honour, I came to see the King.” “But what made you come above 100 miles on such an errand?” “Why, to be sure, it was a good walk, but I thought nothing of it, when I considered how much further His Majesty, long life to him, had to *come to see me!*”’

V.

But we approach the tragedy of this full and laborious life. Early in 1822, in a letter to his brother, Lord Castlereagh complains that the work of being Foreign Secretary and leading the House of Commons was too much for him, and that he would either have to give up one or the other. Only those who have held similar positions to those he held can appreciate what the work must have been, and he had occupied both posts ten years. He was an indefatigable worker. His official correspondence alone fills seventy large volumes, and every draft both at War Office and

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Foreign Office are in his own handwriting. The session had been extremely arduous, and the long tension had worn the high-strung, self-contained, sensitive spirit. There were again difficulties in the South of Europe, and he was appointed special envoy.

It is easy to understand that, after having had the entire control of England's foreign relations, he could not possibly allow delicate negotiations concerning them to be conducted by any one except himself. A terrible fear assailed him that he might not be able to proceed to Verona where the new Congress was to be held.

While in this neurotic condition he was seized with a bad attack of gout, and, fearing that he might not be able to throw it off sufficiently to proceed on his journey, he took an enormous quantity of lowering drugs in the endeavour to get the better of it. In these days of improved medical treatment, those consulted would understand how to deal with a patient suffering from over-strain and nervous breakdown following such continuous work, but, alas! Castlereagh's medical attendants did not realise how ill he was. The gallant spirit, that had never quailed for one second in all his political career, now gave way under the nervous strain, and after three days' illness Castlereagh took his own life. In his correspondence there are two affectionate letters from George IV. and one from Lord Liverpool, begging him to take care of himself and not to trouble himself with public affairs till his health was restored.

Those from the King I now print for the first time; they possess a pathetic interest:

'DEAR LONDONDERRY,—I am so very uneasy at the state of feverishness, under which you were labour-

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ing when I saw you this morning, that I cannot rest, until you have written me word, that you have seen Dr. Bankshead before you return into the country. Or, if you cannot meet with him, pray send, I conjure of you, for my friend, Sir William Knighton.

‘Ever your affte. Friend,

‘Augt. 9th, 1822.

‘G.R.’

‘DEAR LORD LONDONDERRY,—A violent gale of wind, quite in our teeth obliged us to take shelter in this Bay; under these circumstances I have the opportunity of enquiring for your health, and which I hope is satisfactorily amended, since we parted.

‘Let me entreat of you, not to hurry your Continental Journey, until you feel yourself quite equal to it. Remember of what importance your health is to the country, but above all things to me. I am tolerable, not very well.

‘Believe me, always Your sincere Friend,

‘BERWICK BAY,

G.R.

‘Augt. 13th, 1822.

‘MARQUIS OF LONDONDERRY, K.G., ETC.’

The second of these letters never reached him.

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori. And is it one whit more glorious for a man to die for his country on the field of battle than to consecrate his whole life and shatter his constitution in her service?

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VI.

And now to sum up the character of the subject of the foregoing sketch. It has been deeply interesting to me at this distance of time to look through the memoirs, letters, and histories of his contemporaries with the view of discovering whether the judgment which history has lightly passed on Lord Castlereagh was in any degree deserved. The warm sympathies of the writer, it is vain to deny, have been entirely gained by the unpopular Minister. This unpopularity of his was caused by his living in a time of transition. He was convinced that the Liberal ideas then percolating through society were calculated to upset the whole system of government, and he therefore conscientiously opposed them. But let us pass to his personal qualities. Friends and enemies unite in describing him as one of the most beautiful of human beings. Sir Jonah Barrington, alluding to the debate in the Irish House of Commons, the divisions of which carried the Union, speaks of Castlereagh's 'beautiful and impassive face.' He had the reputation of a most fascinating and persuasive manner, and, to use an expression current in his Irish home, he could 'whistle a bird off a tree.' The present generation, if they think of Lord Castlereagh at all, probably think of him as a cold, passionless, ambitious despot, rigidly opposed to the will of the people, and they entirely forget the great services he rendered to his country by carrying the Legislative Union between England and Ireland. They forget that it was his consummate statesmanship and inexorable purpose which prosecuted the

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Peninsular War, checked the power of Napoleon, and gave peace to England for forty years. 'They forget,' as Alison says, 'that he found arrayed against him a brilliant Opposition, . . . headed by Brougham, and often by Canning, and numbering amongst its ranks Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. Tierney, Mr. Horner, Mr. Ponsonby, Sir James Graham, Mr. Grattan, Sir Samuel Romilly, and many of the most powerful debaters whom England has ever seen assembled within the Chapel of St. Stephen. He must have had some eminent qualities as an orator, who, with very little assistance from his own side, was able to make head for such a time against such a phalanx. Nor is it difficult to discern, even through the dim light of Parliamentary Reports, how this came to pass. His speeches were full of information, ably argued, and contain the best summary of the views on which the Government of the time was founded that are perhaps anywhere to be met with.'

He was pursued, as was said before, by the rancour of the poets, the most brilliant and most virulent example of which is Shelley's arraignment in 'The Masque of Anarchy.' He was not inaccessible to satire, and Moore (it must be owned) held him up to ridicule in rather an amusing manner. People are prone in the case of two great men, whether opponents in party politics or rivals in the same Cabinet, to consider admiration for one equivalent to detraction from the merits of the other; we notice it in the cases of Pitt and Fox; of Gladstone and Disraeli; of Castlereagh and Canning. The latter's brilliancy has undoubtedly outdazzled the more solid qualities of his predecessor in office. It is interesting to quote the

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contemporary opinion of Croker, who was Canning's great friend :

‘I am sorry to be obliged to confess that all Canning's conduct gives a handle to this sort of imputation. His genius is a bright flame, but it is

“Brillant comme le feu que les villageois font
Pendant l'obscur nuit sur le sommet d'un mont.”

It is liable to every gust of wind, and every change of weather ; it flares, it flickers, and it blazes, now climbing the heavens, now stifled in its own smoke, and of no use but to raise the wonder of distant spectators, and to warm the very narrow circle that immediately surrounds it. If he does not take care, the Canning bonfire will soon burn itself out. Londonderry goes on as usual, and to continue my similes, like Mont Blanc, continues to gather all the sunshine upon his icy head. He is better than ever ; that is, colder, steadier, more *pococurante*, and withal more amiable and respected. It is a splendid summit of bright and polished frost which, like the travellers in Switzerland, we all admire, but no one can hope, and few would wish, to reach.’

There seem to have been two Lord Castlereaghs, so different does he appear in the description given of him in his public capacity and in the character that he showed in his private life. In public he was undoubtedly the cool and passionless Castlereagh described by Caulaincourt at Châtillon ; but in his private character he had an ardent, high-spirited, impetuous, and affectionate nature. He had most high-bred and courtly manners, and was most easy of access. Mr. Rush, the American Minister from 1817 to 1825, says :

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‘ See him when you would, he had always an ear for public affairs . . . he was not a man to speak hastily —always self-possessed, always firm and fearless, his judgment was the guide of his opinions, and his opinions the guide of his conduct, undaunted by opposition in Parliament or out of it.’—Rush: *The Court of London from 1819 to 1825*, p. 120. (London, 1873.)

He seems never to have been led away or over-elated by success, or to have been unduly depressed by failure. He had that greatest of all political talents—a sense of the true proportion of events, and when he was the most powerful Minister in this country he considered all questions with reference to the Empire, and was not led away from his main object by allowing small matters to assume great proportions in the excitement of the moment. He had an extraordinarily even judgment, and once having decided the course he intended to pursue, followed it unswervingly. He viewed political questions from the standpoint of a great statesman, and not with the eyes of the Head of a Department. He was extremely far-seeing in his conclusions, as when, at the end of the great war, he implored the country not to grudge the expense of keeping up the army. Had his advice been then followed the country might have been saved from the muddle which ensued, years later, during the Crimean Campaign. In his private life Castlereagh was most tenacious of his friendships, and never forgot any one who had ever done him a service. In public opinion he has always been considered an autocratic ruler. It is certainly true that he did not wait for popular guidance, yet he fully appreciated that no Minister could lead this country successfully unless his policy was

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cordially supported by the people. In a letter to his brother he says :

‘I wish you distinctly to understand that, in proportion as events at Paris and here give to our general position a more serious character, our Allies may expect to see us more determinedly wedded to the position upon which alone we feel the smallest hopes of rallying the national sentiment, if necessary, to exertion. Pitt, in the early years of the late war, neglected the necessary caution in this respect. He was thereby weakened for the first ten years of the war by a decided schism of public opinion, whether the war was of necessity or brought on by bad management. In all the latter years of the war, profiting by experience, we never exposed ourselves to a question of this nature, and we were supported in the war under all its accumulated burdens, by the whole energy and power of the nation. This is our compass, and by this we must steer ; and our Allies on the Continent may be assured that they will deceive themselves if they suppose that we could for six months act with them unless the mind of the nation was in the cause. They must not, therefore, press us to place ourselves on any ground John Bull will not maintain ; and as to Metternich’s instructions, it is a mere protraction of etiquette if explained and limited in the only sense in which we could be parties to it.’—*Letter from Lord Castlereagh to Lord Stewart, Feb. 24th, 1820.*

It is shown ‘ . . . that Lord Castlereagh’s whole policy when he became in a manner the Arbitrator of Europe, in 1814 and 1815, was a carrying out of the views of Mr. Pitt as developed in the formation of the European Confederacy in 1805 ; and it was at this

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time that these views were first fully impressed upon him. How seldom in this world is wisdom and patriotism thus privileged to leave its mantle to a successor!'^{*} And now they sleep side by side in the north aisle of Westminster Abbey!

Though so many allusions are made by contemporary writers to Lord Castlereagh's bad speaking, it is almost incredible that if he had been as inarticulate as is stated he should have been able to lead the House of Commons for ten years. His Letters and Memoranda, which are most voluminous, are explicit and terse, as is a despatch moving Sir Robert Wilson from command of the German-Spanish Army into that of Austria, which begins with the following words:

'If Sir Robert Wilson has acquired the confidence of European Governments he has most certainly lost that of his own.'

His speeches, as published in the Parliamentary Debates, are by no means brilliant essays, but they are couched in terse, forcible language, and they evidently produced upon his hearers the effect he intended, though here again he suffered from comparison with the more brilliant Canning. On occasions he could be almost epigrammatic, a quality which, when the expressions may easily be misconstrued, is liable to add to the number of a man's enemies; as when he said during a period of distress 'that he would sooner pay people to dig holes to fill them up than give them money for nothing.' He invented the happy phrase, 'ignorant impatience of taxation.' On the other hand, he is reported to have used long,

^{*} Sir A. Alison.

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involved sentences and sometimes Irishisms, as when he implored the Members of the House of Commons 'not to turn their backs upon themselves,' a sentence which, after all, though not logically correct, is extremely expressive. One of his phrases in his speech advocating the carrying the Union between England and Ireland was 'consolidation of the Empire,' which is now a commonplace in every Imperialist's vocabulary. He sought continental alliances, made England powerful enough to take the first place in the Councils of Europe; he formed the highest ideal as to the place his country ought to occupy in the balance of the world's power, and as long as he lived she held that proud position.

Throughout his life he bore an irreproachable character. His brain was cool, his intellectual vision clear, his will strong, and his manner most conciliatory, with both friends and opponents. He had no fear of responsibility. He was above all petty intrigue, and he was absolutely trusted by his party. With the exception of eloquence, he had every quality essential to a great leader of the House of Commons. He possessed extraordinary self-control. He was a man of indefatigable industry, irresistible energy, indomitable courage, and inexorable purpose. No man less admirably constituted could have carried his point as often as he did in the face of the opposition he encountered, not only in Parliament and in the country, but in Europe.

Sir James Graham wrote after his death :

' . . . no Leader of a Party has been so generous towards his adversaries. History will be more just than his contemporaries.

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‘He is not the first great man over whose tomb has been written *Ingrata Patria*.’

Yet history still delays in doing justice to him!

The Duke of Wellington, who owed so much to him, thus described him to Lady Salisbury, these expressions being from her private diary:

‘. . . . Lord Castlereagh possessed a clear mind, the highest talents and the most steady principle, *more so than anybody I ever knew*—he could do everything but speak in Parliament, that he could not do. . . .’
—*June 5th, 1836.*

‘The Duke was talking this morning at breakfast of his former colleagues in Lord Liverpool’s Cabinet. . . . He [Lord Liverpool] said one day to Mr. Arbuthnot, “I never hear the lock of the door turn, but I dread a visit from Canning.” Lord Castlereagh used to do everything he could to smooth difficulties and make things easy for me, but if there is a pamphlet or a passage of a newspaper that Canning thinks he has reason to complain of, he comes to me about it: he works me with a 20-horse power.’—*Sept. 1st, 1836.*

‘I rode again with the D. He told me when office was first proposed to him by Lord Castlereagh after the Congress of Aix la Chapelle he had the greatest dislike to accepting it, and the only thing that determined him was the assurance that if he refused to join he should weaken the Ministry and become a rallying point for the disaffected.’—*August 25th, 1837.*

‘The D. spoke of Canning, Peel, and Lord Castlereagh, and of their several abilities, and I was much struck with his manner of *valuing* them, which was wholly in reference to their habits of business, common sense and information on necessary topics: what one

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should describe as genius or talent seemed to go for nothing with him. He said Canning was "*a man of imagination, always in a delusion*, never saw things as they were," that he had wonderful powers of speaking and writing and in that was superior to Mr. Pitt, who could speak but not write, but that he was wholly uninformed as to foreign affairs; in short, spoke of him as a charlatan. Peel also, he said, knew nothing of foreign affairs, but they were not in his province—and that he was thoroughly acquainted with official business at home. Lord Londonderry could neither speak nor write, but he was completely master of all our foreign relations and knew what he was about. I observed that the two latter were honest men than Canning—he said Lord Cas. was perfectly so, but Peel was not always scrupulous as to the means he used to gain his object, and his object was often a mean and petty one.'—*April 8th, 1838.*

I now insert Lord Brougham's and the Duke of Buckingham's contemporary accounts. This is Brougham's account of Lord Castlereagh as a statesman :

'He was of sober and industrious habits, and became of businesslike talent by long experience, and if you were to judge his intellect by evidence we should certainly form a very unfair estimate of his perspicacity. No man ever before obtained the station of a regular Debater of our Parliament with such an entire want of good classical accomplishment and, indeed, of all literary profession whatsoever.

'Wherefore, when the Tory party, "having a devil," preferred him to Mr. Canning for their leader, all men naturally expected that he would entirely fail

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to command even the attendance of the House while he addressed it; and that the benches, empty during his time, would only be replenished when his highly-gifted competitor rose. They were greatly deceived; they under-rated the effect of place and power; they forgot that the representative of a government speaks "as one having authority, and not as the Scribes." But they also forgot that Lord Castlereagh had some qualities well fitted to conciliate favour, and even to provoke admiration, in the absence of everything like eloquence. He was a bold and fearless man; the very courage with which he exposed himself unabashed to the most critical audience in the world, while incapable of uttering two sentences of anything but the meanest matter, in the most wretched language; the gallantry with which he faced the greatest difficulties of a question; the unflinching perseverance with which he went through a whole subject, leaving untouched not one of its points, whether he could grapple with it or no, and not one of the adverse arguments, however forcibly and felicitously they had been urged, neither daunted by recollecting the impression just made by his antagonist's brilliant display, nor damped by consciousness of the very rags in which he now presented himself—all this made him upon the whole rather a favourite with the audience whose patience he was taxing mercilessly, and whose gravity he ever and anon put to a severe trial. Nor can any one have forgotten the kind of pride that mantled on the fronts of the Tory phalanx, when, after being overwhelmed with the powerful fire of the Whig opposition, or galled by the fierce denunciations of the Mountain, or harassed by the splendid displays of Mr. Canning, their chosen leader

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stood forth, and presenting the graces of his eminently patrician figure, flung off his coat, displayed an azure ribbon traversing a snow-white chest, and declared his high satisfaction that he could now meet the charges against him face to face, and repel with indignation all that his adversaries were bold and rash enough to advance.

‘Such he was in debate; in council he certainly had far more resources. He possessed a considerable fund of plain sense, not to be misled by any refinement of speculation, or clouded by any fanciful notions. He went straight to his point. He was brave politically as well as personally. Of this, his conduct on the Irish Union had given abundant proof; and nothing could be more just than the rebuke which, as connected with the topic of personal courage, we may recollect his administering to a great man who had passed the limits of Parliamentary courtesy—“Every one must be sensible,” he said, “that if any personal quarrel were desired, any insulting language used publicly where it could not be met as it deserved was the way to prevent and not to produce such a rencounter.” No one after that treated him with disrespect. The complaints made of his Irish administration were well grounded as regarded the corruption of the Parliament by which he accomplished the Union, though he had certainly no direct hand in the bribery practised; but they were certainly unfounded as regarded the cruelties practised during and after the Rebellion. Far from taking part in these atrocities, he uniformly and strenuously set his face against them. He was of a cold temperament and determined character, but not of a cruel disposition; and to him,

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more than perhaps to any one else, was owing the termination of the system stained with blood. It is another topic of high praise that he took a generous part against the faction which, setting themselves against all liberal, all tolerant government, sought to drive from their posts the two most venerable rulers with whom Ireland had ever been blessed, Cornwallis and Abercromby. Nor can it be too often repeated that when his colleagues acting under Lord Clare had denounced Mr. Grattan, in the Lords' Report, as implicated in a guilty knowledge of the rebellion, he, and he alone, prevented the Report of the Commons from joining in the same groundless charge against the illustrious patriot. An intimation of this from a common friend [who communicated the remarkable fact to the author of these pages] alone prevented a personal meeting between the two upon a subsequent occasion.'

The Duke of Buckingham thus writes :

'It is, however, evident that as his health began to fail from the long course of exhausting labours which his office imposed upon him, he became more sensitive to such provocations, and though he carefully concealed it from outward view, an increasing irritability affected his whole nervous system.

'The melancholy result, though unfortunately too easily explained, excited reports as ingenious as malevolent, to account for its suddenness, but like the injustice to his memory he has received from rivals or successors who sought to raise a reputation by advocating an adverse policy, they had but a brief existence. As a statesman, as a gentleman, as a man, the Marquis of Londonderry was the Bayard of political chivalry, *sans peur et sans reproche*. . . . The characters of

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few public men have been so unfairly treated; his political opponents, numbering among them many writers of great ability and influence, have allowed their judgments to be warped by party animosity, and have descended to misrepresentation to an extent truly pitiable. Thus his countrymen have received impressions of his policy and administrative capacity during his long and arduous career, totally at variance with the truth. One writer of eminence has, however, recently stepped forward to uphold his fame with emphatic earnestness, and we make no apology for inserting here his estimate of this distinguished and much-maligned statesman:

‘His whole life was a continual struggle with the majority of his own or foreign lands: he combated to subdue or bless them. He began his career by strenuous efforts to effect the Irish Union, and rescue his native country from the incapable Legislature by which its energies had so long been repressed. His mature strength was exerted in a long and desperate conflict with the despotism of Revolutionary France, which his firmness as much as the arm of Wellington brought to a triumphant issue; his latter days in a ceaseless conflict with the revolutionary spirit in his own country, and an anxious effort to uphold the dignity of Great Britain and the independence of lesser States abroad. . . . His policy in domestic affairs was marked by the same far-seeing wisdom, the same intrepid resistance to the blindness of present clamour. He made the most strenuous efforts to uphold the Sinking Fund—that noble monument of Mr. Pitt’s patriotic foresight; had those efforts been successful the whole National Debt would have been paid off by

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the year 1845, and the Nation *for ever* have been freed from the payment of 80,000,000 a year for its interest. He resisted with a firm hand, and at the expense of present popularity with the multitude, the efforts of faction during the seven trying years which followed the close of the war and bequeathed a Constitution, after a season of peculiar danger, unshaken to his successors.'

Would that the advantages of sitting on the chair which he used at the Congress of Vienna, writing at the table on which the Peace of Paris was signed, catching as I glance up from my paper the beautiful features and the calm clear gaze of his last portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence, had inspired me to do justice to my subject! In one thing only am I worthy of it, and that is in the sincerity and depth of my admiration.

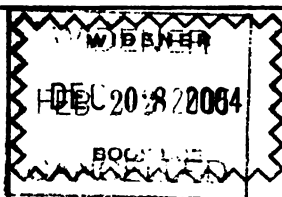
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